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## THESIS

### THE CZECH REPUBLIC IN NATO: A STUDY OF SMALL POWER'S DEFENSE POLICY

by

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December, 1997

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**THE CZECH REPUBLIC IN NATO: A STUDY OF  
SMALL POWER'S DEFENSE POLICY**

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## ABSTRACT

The Czech Republic, slated to be a future member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1999, will likely occupy a weak position within NATO's decision-making process.

The country's historical experience, its geo-strategic situation, and certain economic factors have led Czech policy makers to the strategic decision to join NATO. The Czech Republic's security and defense policy, together with its strategic political culture will influence the country's future role in NATO. However, because it is a small state and because of other inherent structural factors, the Czech Republic will probably fail to occupy a position in NATO comparable with other small powers. This contrasts directly with the case of the Netherlands, a small state in the Alliance which has managed to become a reliable member and occupy an influential position. Although both countries had similar motives for joining or having joined NATO, certain aspects of the Czech Republic's policies and strategic political culture do not correspond with those of the Dutch.

In order to enjoy fully the "security benefits" derived from a strong position in the Alliance, as does the Netherlands, the Czech Republic's policy makers will have to readjust its priorities in security and defense policy. In particular, it will have to endeavor to make some sort of significant contribution to the strategic political culture of NATO.





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## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. THESIS STATEMENT

This thesis is based on the premise that a small state, despite limits resulting from its “smallness,”<sup>1</sup> can significantly influence security benefits resulting from membership in a military Alliance. The number of benefits that would favor solving a given state’s security concerns will depend, among other factors, on the position or role which that given state possesses in the eyes of its allies.<sup>2</sup> Such a state's position in a military Alliance is built upon the security and defense policy it contributes to the Alliance, and by the strategic, political culture it develops to implement the policy.

As can be seen in Figure 1 on the next page, any strategic decisions that a country makes is based on three determinants: 1) its historical experiences; 2) its geo-strategic situation; and 3) economic factors. From this decision, in turn, proceeds a certain security and defense platform. Moreover, the three determinants of any strategic decision also reflect themselves to certain extent in the ultimate security and defense policy.

In this paper, I will examine the most probable image of the Czech Republic which will be perceived in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.<sup>3</sup> I will focus on major factors

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<sup>1</sup> Colin Clarke and Tony Payne, Politics, Security and Development in Small States, (London, Boston, Sydney, and Wellington: Allen & Unwin, 1987), p. ix. Authors cite Benedict Burton’s definition of “smallness” as: “notions of area, population, population density, accessibility, economic resources, market size, degree of political development.”

<sup>2</sup> R. L. Rothstein, Alliance and Small Powers ( New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty, Washington DC, 4th April 1949.

which determine this position, and on opportunities to realize the expectations of the Czech Republic's policy makers.

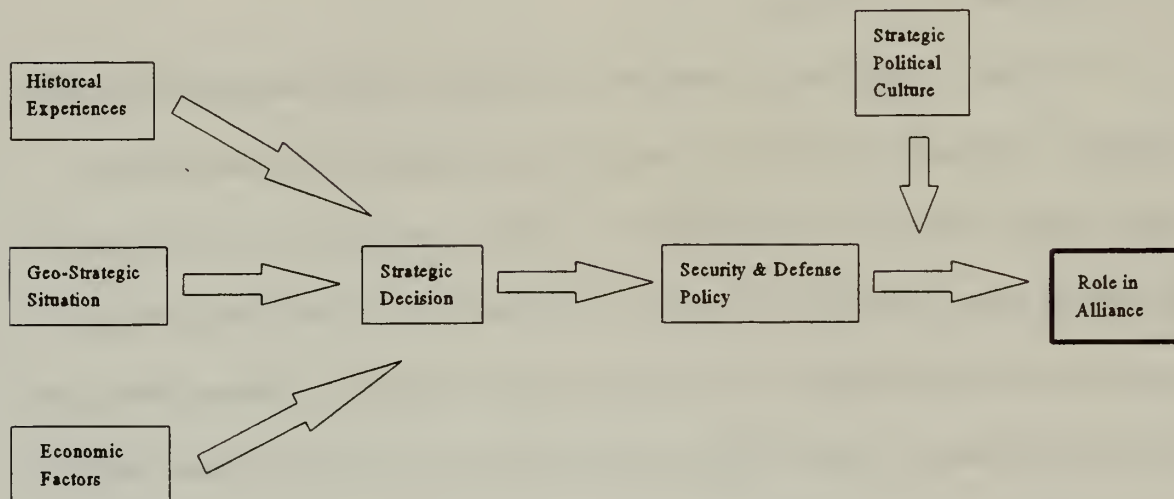


Figure 1. Factors that Ultimately Affect a Country's Role in an Alliance

## B. DEFINING CONCEPT

There are two basic strategies which small states generally implement in the arena of international relations. First is the strategy of cohesion, or the small state as binding agent. In this position, the small state can be seen as a bridge builder, mediator, facilitator, good institutional citizen, selfless contributor, and/or helpful fixer.

Second is the strategy of opportunism and extraction. Such a state is seen as a reluctant, security consumer. Of course, strategies of cohesion and opportunism/extraction need not be mutually exclusive.<sup>4</sup> Both may be employed at the same time in alliances.

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<sup>4</sup> Allen Sens, "Small-State Security in Europe: Threats, Anxieties and Strategies After the Cold War" in Small States and the Security Challenge in the New Europe, ed. Werner Bauwens (London and Washington: Brassey's, 1996), pp. 90-93.

According to its particular posture to the Alliance on any given point, small members may belong to one or the other category.

### C. IMPORTANCE

For several reasons, the results of this study may be important to small states in general, and to the Czech Republic NATO policy-makers, in particular. Firstly, a small state learns what should be its contribution to an alliance to gain maximal security profit. Then, Czech policymakers learn what they should do to achieve such a position within NATO to gain the security profit from system of collective defense. Next, an early adjustment of Czech policy to the stated recommendations will smooth the process of NATO enlargement ratification. Finally, defining constraints upon the Czech Republic's integration process in NATO will help the NATO community to focus their assistance efficiently on the weaknesses of the process of enlargement.

Looking back to the first reason, treaties of alliance tend always to be advantageous to smaller states. Small states tend to be weak states in the world hierarchy of power. In their effort to resolve security concerns, they usually seek resources to bolster their national security against both external threats (aggression) and internal threats (subversion).<sup>5</sup> A treaty of alliance can be one such resource against these threats.

It is important to note that a treaty of alliance is seen by some policy theorists as a product of international law with a major weakness. That is, the concerns of a sovereign

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<sup>5</sup> Hakan Wiberg, "Security Problems of Small Nations" in Small States and the Security Challenge in the New Europe, ed. Werner Bauwens (London and Washington: Brassey's, 1996), p. 22.



state are superior to a rule of international law, so some states do not feel obliged to obey it, since there is no punishment. Consequently, uncertainty manifests itself when notions of common security (nuclear weapons for example) do not work any longer.

However, an agreement of collective defense, despite the mentioned shortcomings, is the best tool for the security of a small state. A position of reliable ally in such an exclusive club can help reduce any hesitation on the part of the other allies to respond decisively and efficiently in the case of an aggressor's attack against their small 'reliable' partner.<sup>6</sup>

Second, knowledge of the conclusions resulting from this thesis can be useful to the Czech Republic itself. In July 1997, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary received invitations to join NATO in 1999. Adjusting to the attributes of the exemplary security and defense policy (the adoption of which allows small NATO members to be labeled "reliable allies"), together with profound development and the timely implementation of an appropriate strategic political culture help facilitate new membership ratifications in the parliaments of NATO Allies. By following these recommendations, and by keeping on this track during the beginning of the country's membership, the Czech Republic might persuade partners in the Alliance to consider with favor the effort the Czech Republic has made to shift from an image of passive security-consumer to valuable ally, and thus, to take her membership in NATO more seriously.

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<sup>6</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty, Washington DC, 4th April 1949, Article 5.

Third, the conclusions of this thesis contradict opinions in the Czech Republic's ongoing national political debate over how membership in NATO might cause the country to lose its sovereignty, leaving its fate in the hands of its larger, more powerful allies.<sup>7</sup>

Last, since the new-member ratification process has started in the national parliaments of the NATO countries,<sup>8</sup> this study aspires to provide arguments to those decision makers that describe the relevant limits, constraints, motives, and opportunities of the Czech Republic in its current stage of membership application.

#### **D. METHODOLOGY**

To define the relative position of the Czech Republic in NATO, I will describe, in this comparative case study, the case studies of the Netherlands and the Czech Republic. In both cases, I will examine the impact of the determinants (history, geo-strategic situation, and economic factors) and modulators (security and defense policies, and strategic political culture) on the effort of a small state to build up a respectful position within the Alliance. In the Dutch case, I will describe the impact of the same modulators on the image of the Netherlands in NATO. Further, I will compare and contrast both the Dutch and the Czech cases to generate positive and negative correlations that may be meaningful with respect to the Czech Republic's prospective position in NATO.

To formulate the recommendations for any Czech security and defense policy or political culture that may be implemented, I will compare not only the modulators of both

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<sup>7</sup> Jan Pergler, "Vacek: Republika ztratí svou suverenitu," Lidové Noviny, May 5, 1997.

<sup>8</sup> "Senát už začal jednat o alianci," Mladá fronta DNES, 8 October 1997, p. 1.



cases, but also the current position of the Netherlands in NATO with the prospective position of the Czech Republic.

## **E. WAY FORWARD**

The body of this thesis contains three chapters. Chapter Two describes the case of the Dutch. By examining its main historical events, the aspects of its geo-strategic situation, and its economic factors, I will narrow down the Dutch determinants to those which influenced national decision-makers in reorienting the Dutch policy to alignment. Further, I will describe the Dutch security and defense policy and strategic political culture to identify the main agents that have contributed to the Netherlands' image in NATO.

In Chapter Three, I will provide a case study of the Czech Republic, focusing on identical variables. Defining the main characteristics of the Czech security and defense policy, its determinants, and its limits will be crucial for the analysis in the fourth chapter.

In the fourth, pivotal chapter, I will point out the main correlations, both positive and negative, between the two case studies, analyze them, define the position of the Czech Republic in the Alliance, and formulate suggestions and recommendations for Czech decision-makers to improve this position.

## **F. JUSTIFICATION**

I chose the Dutch case for a number of reasons. Firstly, the Netherlands is a small state. Several times, Dutch officials have expressed their concern over this exact position in

international relations. Belonging to this category of states usually entails certain limits, which are identical with those of the Czech Republic.

Second, both countries have had similar experiences in modern European history. Both states were relatively weak defensively in the period of time just previous to World War II , and the trauma caused by the German occupation directly effected changes in their post-war security and defense policies. Notwithstanding that, both countries are German neighbors and now cooperate closely with Germany, though only within political limits allowed by the anti-German sentiment of their citizens.

Also, location is important. Both countries occupy strategically important areas between great powers likely to be struck in any major European conflict. The Dutch ports supply a great portion of Europe and the Czech Republic lies on the strategical West-East axis. Their experiences in World War II demonstrate the geo-strategical importance of both countries.

Finally, similar economic backgrounds allow for the comparison of both cases. Since the Netherlands had a destroyed economy after World War II, it focused on reconstruction and economic stability, while the needs of strengthening its defense capability were neglected. We can see a very similar pattern in post-communist Czechoslovakia. The large and highly productive industrial base prior to communism was devastated by years of central planning, and the Czechoslovak and, lately, the Czech government have been concentrating on making the transformation to a market economy. Thus, military affairs have received only secondary attention by the government, despite a stronger need for readiness and national defense capability.

In the following chapter, I will describe the Dutch historical experiences, limits, and other relevant factors that led the country on its road from military weakness to alignment in NATO with other western democracies, an alignment in which it established itself as a reliable ally.

## II. CASE STUDY: THE NETHERLANDS

According to Domke, “most familiar refrain to observers of Dutch politics, and especially of Dutch security policy is that Holland is a small country. Size does explain some of the basic trends and special problems observed in postwar Dutch defense.”<sup>9</sup>

The Netherlands was a founding member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (1949) and it has been seen as a reliable ally continually for the almost 50 years of its NATO membership. Although some people claim that Dutch society has experienced political polarization over security and defense issues since the mid-1960's<sup>10</sup> and that subsequently, “attitudes toward security, defense and NATO issues were shifting significantly,”<sup>11</sup> it has not had any major influence on the Netherlands's long-term positive image in NATO. On the contrary, the Netherlands has remained a great supporter of NATO policy. Regardless of the heavy nuclear debate throughout the 1980's, the Netherlands defense policy had stayed closely tied with NATO's strategy of defense, deterrence, and flexible response until the end of the Cold War.<sup>12</sup> No fundamental changes have occurred since 1990 with respect to the newly emerging options in European security architecture. Indeed, the Netherlands

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<sup>9</sup> William K. Domke, “The Netherlands: Strategy Options and Change,” in Evolving European Defense Policies, ed. Kelleher and Mattox (Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company, 1987), p. 273.

<sup>10</sup> Richard A. Bitzinger “The Low Countries,” in Transition and Turmoil in the Atlantic Alliance, ed. Robert A. Levine (New York: Crane Russak, 1991), p. 199.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 214.

<sup>12</sup> Domke, p. 292.

defense reform has followed NATO's "New Strategic Concept," a conformity which has confirmed its image as a reliable partner.

One might see such reliability as blind unity. However, these policies should be considered as a decisive willingness to engage in collective defense,<sup>13</sup> intensive communication in time of crisis,<sup>14</sup> and burden and risk-sharing.

A question arises about the Dutch case: Why is the Netherlands a reliable NATO member and what contributed to this image? Modern Dutch history, its geo-strategic situation, and its economic factors significantly determined the strategic decision of the Netherlands to join the alliance (at first, the Brussels Treaty and later on, NATO). These basic determinants are then also reflected in the principles of the Dutch security and defense policy within the Dutch alignment in NATO. Security and defense policy, together with a developed strategic political culture are the foundations of the Dutch position in the alliance.

The historical experience of the Dutch people helped confirm the rationale in their post-war government's decision to solve their security dilemma through a collective defense. A decline of colonial power, low security guarantees resulting from a policy of neutrality, invasion, and the occupation by German armies (all bitter facts of either World War II, or the period before or after) were the factors in Dutch history that influenced their decision to participate in alliances.

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<sup>13</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty, (Washington, D.C.,: 1949), Article 5.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Risse-Kappen, Cooperation Among Democracies ( Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 91.



The overall limiting aspects of the geo-strategic position of the Netherlands determined some of the factors that helped form the decision of the Dutch officials to change their posture of neutrality in its foreign policy to one of defense cooperation among democracies. The small size and location of the country, sandwiched among three major powers, at a crossroad of trade lines, were the main limits which determined the strategic decision.

Certain economic factors also affected the Dutch decisions in national post World War II security. Holland's poor economy was not helped by its policy of neutrality as the country was exploited by all hostile sides in both World Wars. Moreover, the costs of post-war reconstruction, unemployment, inflation and other destabilizing factors were high, comparable with those of the countries directly involved in World War II. A preference for stabilizing the post war economy before building armed forces, and a demand for increased defense capabilities led to the decision to facilitate these goals within an alliance.

Recovering the Dutch post War economy also led to military integration. The Netherlands based the recovery on using massive economic aid through Marshall Plan, and on economic integration within region. Dutch economic dependence on a Germany that was occupied by the victorious powers required that the Dutch cooperate closely with the supervising powers not only with respect to the economy, but also in military, and foreign policy.

All these three basic aspects (historical experience, geo-strategic situation, and economy) affected the strategic decision of the Dutch to participate in a military alliance of western democracies. Further, the Dutch security and defense policy, which was based on

this decision, and the strategic political culture then became the main modulators of the Dutch position within NATO.

The Dutch security and defense policy was strictly subordinated to NATO defense-planning and strategic concepts, flexibly adjusting to any announced changes. When the economic development and domestic political situation allowed, the armed forces were modernized and defense capability increased. By sharing the alliance's tasks and cooperating closely with other allies, the Dutch gained respect in the eyes of the other allies.

Alongside this kind of security and defense policy, the Dutch strategic political culture played significant role in the Dutch effort to achieve a prominent position within alliance's structures. Strong political consensus among the Dutch, support among the citizens for a Dutch security and defense policy tied closely to the Euro-Atlantic defense concept, and the public concern demonstrated by political elites' about national security were decisive elements in helping to formulate the strategic political culture which has tremendously influenced the position of the Netherlands in NATO. Logically starting with the examination of the most important historical events and processes, let us briefly summarize what the essential historical points were that prompted the strategic decision to leave behind a century-old policy of neutrality, and to enter into and firmly integrate within West European and, later, Euro-Atlantic defense structures.



## **A. DETERMINANTS OF THE STRATEGIC DECISION**

### **1. A Lesson from History**

The fate of a country is rightly in the hands of authorities, if they choose to take their national history into account to ensure a better and safer future for their citizens. It works both in the case of small states and that of great ones as well. For example, the course of World War II reoriented the foreign policy of neutrality not only in the Netherlands but also in the United States. The Netherlands left their policy of neutrality behind and allied with others. Yet, learning such a lesson from history was a long-term process. In order to understand this process, it would be worthwhile to study Dutch history from the Golden Age of the nation (starting in the end of 16th century) to World War II, (when the Netherlands became a member of Euro Atlantic defense community).

After examining the large epoch of Dutch history, I have found that three aspects are significant to our study. First is the sharp decline of Dutch colonial power from a great power of decisive strength on an international scale in 18th century, to a small power with a far less significant position in 20th century.

Secondly, a foreign policy of neutrality is not a rational option for the security dilemma of any country who is of the Netherlands' parameters. Located among the three Great Powers at the gate of European trade and possessing a large economic base, the Netherlands could not carry out a scrupulous foreign policy of neutrality. In response to the Netherlands' pursuit of an active role in promoting permanent peace and security, the Great Powers showed little respect to Dutch neutrality and independence.

Thirdly, the German invasion in 1940 and the five-year occupation of the country with all its military, political, social, and moral consequences exposed the bitter weakness of neutrality.

Finally, the events of the early, post World War II period were the last stones on the Netherlands' road to military alliance. Fear of a renewed German threat, the emerging Cold War, and the likely nuclear dimension of any future European conflict galvanized western democracies into a strong military alliance, which acted as a firm counterweight to the Eastern Bloc's security system for over 40 years.

#### *a. Decline of Colonial Power*

Some scholars simplify the foreign policy history of the Netherlands as one of a declining power.<sup>15</sup> In fact, a phase that began with decades of military, economic, political, cultural and intellectual blossom in the 17th century culminated in years of economic devastation, military defeat, and loss of national sovereignty during the five years of Nazi occupation in World War II.

Within this long historical period, the Netherlands underwent the transition from a policy of neutrality to one of tight military and political alignment. One of the most obvious reasons, of course, is the fact that the Netherlands, originally a great power, became a small power, incapable of persuasive unilateral acts of force in international relations.

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<sup>15</sup> Peter E. Baehr, "The Foreign Policy of the Netherlands," in The Other Powers, ed. Ronald P. Barston (New York: Barnes&Noble, 1973), p. 62-3.

In examining the decline of its power throughout history, it is worthwhile to divide the period of modern Dutch history into three smaller periods of time: its rise, its peak and its fall. The glory of the Netherlands as a great power took place in a period called the “Golden Age.”<sup>16</sup>

(1) *Rise.*

During the early Golden Age (1588-1647), the Republic became a great power. The Netherlands territorially expanded to the North, cleared regions of Spanish garrisons and gained strategic approaches to the Northern Rhine. Militarily, the Netherlands underwent army reforms which are still considered a turning point in the history of soldiering and military organization. The Dutch military reforms of the 1590's were pivotal, introducing basic changes which were then widely adopted all over Europe.<sup>17</sup>

From 1590, there was a dramatic improvements in the Republic's economic circumstances. Commerce and shipping expanded enormously, as did the towns. Dutch commercial and financial activities, skills, technology, and engineering came to exert an immense impact on European culture and perhaps especially in central Europe, Scandinavia, Spain, and, later, Russia.<sup>18</sup> To protect their commerce, the Dutch expanded

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<sup>16</sup> Adriaan J. Barnouw, “The Seventeenth Century: The Golden Age,” in The Netherlands, ed. Robert J. Kerner (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1946), p. 40.

<sup>17</sup> Jonathan Israel, The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477-1806, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 267.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 271.

their navy, until by 1650 it was twice the size of the French and English fleets combined.<sup>19</sup> At the same time, as the Dutch dominance in the “rich trades” commenced, innovations and achievements in Art and architecture proceeded with intensity, which has no parallel in any other time, or place, in history.<sup>20</sup>

The rise of the mechanistic world - viewed within intellectual life, brought new inventions in Mathematics, Physics and Astronomy. Together with progress in the other sciences, long-distance navigation was developed, which made possible a vigorous, successful and enduring maritime expansion in Asian, African, and American seas.

## (2) *Greatness.*

In the latter half of the Golden Age (1647-1702), the Netherlands attained world trade primacy and consolidated a vast and profitable colonial empire in the Western hemisphere as well as another in the Eastern.<sup>21</sup> With the possession of Northern Brazil, the Dutch totally dominated the European sugar market. The Netherlands was by far the strongest European power in Africa, and dominated the transatlantic slave trade. The Dutch were in full control along the Guinea coast, and also conquered Angola from the Portuguese. By 1648 all six of the modern Dutch Antilles - the three “Curacao” islands - Curacao, Aruba, and Bonaire - and the more northerly “Leeward” group - St. Eustatius,

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<sup>19</sup> “Netherlands,” The World Factbook (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1995), p. 300.

<sup>20</sup> Jonathan Israel, p. 548.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 581.

Saba, and half of St. Martin - were under the Dutch flag. Finally, there was “New Netherland” (Nova Belgica), from where the Dutch controlled the North American fur trade from its two bases at Manhattan (New Amsterdam) and Fort Orange, which is today Albany. In the East Indies, the Dutch were solidly entrenched in the Indian subcontinent, Ceylon, Malaya peninsula and Indonesia (and until 1662, Taiwan).<sup>22</sup> But this imposing empire on both sides of the South Atlantic collapsed.

### (3) *Decline.*

The age of military, economic, political and cultural decline (1702-1806), caused by frequent fights with other conquest powers over the colonies, revolutions and counterrevolutions, *coups d'etat*, and finally the French occupation resulted in the long-term decline of Dutch colonial power until the first half of the 20th century.

The year 1702 was a key division in the history of the Netherlands because of the onset of the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-13), the last great European conflict in which the Netherlands participated as a major power. After the War of Spanish Succession (Peace of Utrecht 1713), the Netherlands started to conduct policy of neutrality.<sup>23</sup> The Dutch army fell from 130,000 to 40,000 troops by 1715.<sup>24</sup> Military

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 934.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 960.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 985-6.



expenditure was cut drastically, and with a weakening military followed the collapse of Dutch world trade primacy in the decades 1720-40.<sup>25</sup>

The economic decline of society was followed by the decline of the universities and the decline in visual arts. In addition, society was destabilized by the Second Orangist Revolution (1747-1751), the Patriot Revolution (1780- 1787), the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War (1784), and the Orangist Counter-revolution (1787-1795).

The crushing of the Dutch navy by the British at the battle of Camper Down on October 1797, definitively marked the end of Dutch naval power as a significant force in global politics.<sup>26</sup> Loss of navy power was accompanied by losses of overseas territories. The British empire permanently absorbed Ceylon, and the Dutch enclaves in South India, South Africa, and Jawa. Surinam, west Guyana, and Curacao were temporarily captured. The decline of colonial power lasted in broad sense until 1949, when the Netherlands recognized Indonesia as an independent nation.

Napoleon had achieved absolute power in France and extended his control over the Netherlands. At his direction, General Augereau on September 14, 1801 sponsored a final *coup d'etat* which strengthened executive authority in the Netherlands. Napoleon's wars had ruined the trade which had been the main source of Dutch prosperity.<sup>27</sup> After the separation of Belgium in 1839 the Netherlands completely withdrew

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 998.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1124.

<sup>27</sup> Hendrik N. Boon, "Decline and Reawakening" in *The Netherlands* ed. Robert J. Kerner (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1946), p. 66.

from great-power politics.<sup>28</sup> The Dutch found in a policy of neutrality a tool of ensuring peace for a small state.

In 1997, the Dutch queen remains sovereign of the Netherlands Antilles, Surinam, and Aruba, which became autonomous in internal affairs in 1954, 1975, and 1986, respectively.

*b. Precarious Neutrality*

Since the beginning of 18th century the Netherlands veered toward a policy of neutrality. In fact, Dutch neutrality ensured only fragile peace during the period until World War II. There were two main reasons for this non-persuasive Dutch neutrality in foreign policy. First, The Netherlands, with its traditional enthusiasm for the force of international law, extended commerce and perpetuated its interests from the times of its glory and, overestimating the scope of a small power, did not permit itself to be reduced to any degree of isolationism. Second, the high level of the concern of the Great Powers' in Dutch affairs generated a lack of respect for its neutrality.

The neutrality policy of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century was in reality a pro-French policy and ended in French domination.<sup>29</sup> In spite of its firm national resolve not to participate in international politics, the Netherlands suddenly found itself in the center of world politics with the “Luxembourg Affair.” The nation was shocked to learn that the

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<sup>28</sup> Amry Vandenbosch, Dutch Foreign Policy since 1815: A Study in Small Power Politics (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), p. 4.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., pp. 2-3.



actions of its queen and of its foreign minister had nearly precipitated a general war in Western Europe. Napoleon III, envious and afraid of the expansion of Prussia as the result of the Austro-Prussian war in 1866, demanded compensation for France. He approached King William III as Grand Duke of Luxembourg, for the cession of Luxembourg to France in exchange for a monetary indemnity. Though small, the country would have been of considerable strategic value to France. King William and his foreign minister had obtained the approval of Bismarck for the deal, but when the plan became known in Germany, a national outburst of German sentiment for war followed. Great Britain then called a conference of the Great Powers, in which the demilitarization and neutralization of Luxembourg was agreed upon as the solution to the problem.<sup>30</sup>

Later on, Dutch neutrality was challenged in the Boer War. Tension became acute when it became known that the Boer republics had not been invited to the first Hague Peace Conference in 1899. The Dutch government found itself in a very embarrassing position, for if it had extended an invitation to the Boer republics to send representatives to the conference the British government would not have participated in the conference.<sup>31</sup>

The adherence of the Netherlands to the North Sea Declaration in 1908 led to a series of events which were extremely disturbing to a small state determined to keep out of the main current of world politics. Some officials of the Dutch government saw in the declaration a departure from the traditional policy of strict neutrality. The reason the affair caused such an uproar was that, at about the same time, the Dutch government announced

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 137.

plans for strengthening its coastal defenses. It was assumed that the plans were the result of German pressure. It was contended that the purpose of the plans was to prevent a British fleet from going up the river to the aid of Antwerp should the Germans invade Belgium.<sup>32</sup>

There is a question as to what extent the Dutch policy of neutrality and independence kept the country out of World War I hostilities. The Netherlands was able to stay out of the war for the reason that the Central Powers and the Allies both thought it was in their best interest not to force Holland into war. Germany wished to keep Holland open as a channel through which to receive urgently needed imports from abroad, and Great Britain had no desire to see Germany occupy the Dutch coastline and be free to use Dutch ports and Antwerp as submarine bases.<sup>33</sup> Despite this basic attitude of Germany and Britain, the Netherlands' policy of neutrality did not manage to save the country from the devastating consequences of World War I.

When World War I broke out, Holland found itself unprepared and startled. It had developed a firm belief in international agreements and had not considered European tension too seriously. Nevertheless, measures were taken to protect its borders: the 200,000 men whom the country could bring under arms were immediately mobilized and supplemented by the *Landstorm*, until about 450,000 men were in the field.<sup>34</sup> For four years the armed forces stood guard over the country, which was threatened several times by

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123 and p. 140.

<sup>34</sup> Bartholomew Landheer, "Modern Development," in *The Netherlands*, ed. Robert j. Kerner (Barkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1946), p. 85.

invasion, a danger which fortunately never materialized. Holland suffered severe privations in the war, and its losses from the unrestricted submarine warfare of the Germans were considerable. Nevertheless, Dutch neutrality continued to be respected by both warring powers, because England was not eager to have Germany on the Dutch coastline and Germany, in turn, did not see any advantage in lengthening its front. World War I brought to the Dutch a taste of the world to come - government control over economic activities, large-scale unemployment, and increasing political differentiations.<sup>35</sup>

Providing an asylum for the deposed German emperor in 1918 was preceded by a peculiar incident, not in accordance with the neutral policy of the Netherlands. The Adjutant General to Queen Wilhelmina invited Emperor William II to take refuge in the Netherlands. This act was seen by the Powers as a commitment to international politics.<sup>36</sup>

The Netherlands' Government entered the League of Nations without hesitation in 1919. Since the preparation of the negotiations started during the War, some Dutch saw in League membership a departure from their traditional policy of neutrality and independence.<sup>37</sup>

The historical events described above show that neutrality was not a rational option for Dutch security and defense. The Netherlands had really been tightly involved in international relations because of its concerns for its overseas territories, its high level of international commerce, its physical location among powers, and its strong trust in the

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 86.

<sup>36</sup> Amry Vandenbosch, p. 139.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 145.

power of international law. This Dutch commitment, together with the little respect the Powers gave to Dutch neutrality, taking advantage of them whenever it suited their purposes, reduced the probability of Dutch neutrality.

*c. Consequences of the World War II*

The course of World War II and its consequences for the Dutch state and society was the main catalyst that moved the Dutch along the road from neutrality to collective defense. The Dutch policy of neutrality in the beginning of World War II was a continuation of its policy in World War I, and all of the old problems again presented themselves. World War I had left neutral states sadly impaired and chaotic; the plight of neutrals in the World War II became no better. There were violations of Dutch neutrality by belligerent ships and aircrafts; several Dutch planes were fired on above Netherlands territory; a number of Dutch ships were sunk by German submarines and magnetic mines; German seaplanes fired machine guns and dropped bombs on Dutch fishing boats in the North Sea. Dutch ships on their way to Holland were taken to British control bases for searches, thereby causing considerable delay and loss of money to the owners of the ships and cargo.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 280.

(1) *Pre war period.*

After the collapse of the policy of collective security in the mid-1930's, Dutch foreign policy was still designed to maintain neutrality, just as it had served the Netherlands during the World war I.

Although official relations between the Netherlands and Germany had been good, and the German Foreign Office repeatedly assured the Netherlands government that the *Reich* would respect Dutch neutrality, the Dutch policy was not seen entirely as impartial when international tension began to increase after the German occupation of the Rhineland in 1936. Germany, after the outbreak of the war, sought by a press campaign to frighten the Netherlands into breaking with the League. The German press declared that neutrals attending League meetings were guilty of unneutral acts, because the League had become an "Anglo-French" organ.<sup>39</sup>

The Dutch hoped that the miracle could happen again. Developments in warfare and the ideological character of the gigantic struggle, however, made it extremely unlikely. After the German reoccupation of the Rhineland, the Dutch saw little else that they could do. It was too late to adopt another policy. After that date, any move in the direction of a political or military alliance with France and Great Britain would have been the signal for a speedy invasion of their country. Nor did the Dutch feel that an alliance would add anything to their security.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 147.



On August 28, 1939 the Dutch government ordered the mobilization of the armed forces in anticipation of the outbreak of war. Immediately after the invasion of Poland on September 1, the Dutch government issued a declaration announcing the intention of the Netherlands to stay out of the European conflict. The mobilization was maintained until invasion.<sup>41</sup>

(2) *Invasion.*

On May 10, 1940, at three o'clock in the morning, German troops started to cross the border. German planes bombed Dutch airfields and dropped parachute troops near strategic locations a few days later. Queen Wilhelmina and the royal family went to England on a British destroyer.

By Tuesday, May 14, the military situation became manifestly hopeless. Rotterdam was heavily bombed. The center of the city, including one-eighth of its total area was destroyed. Approximately 900 persons were killed and 78,500 were made homeless. Rotterdam, along with Warsaw and Coventry, became a wartime symbol of Nazi ruthlessness. On the following morning the capitulation was signed.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Werner Warmbrunn, The Dutch under German Occupation 1940-1945, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1963), p. 5.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

### (3) *Occupation.*

The people of Holland entered five years of occupation after a five-day war. Hitler planned to tie the Netherlands to Germany as closely as was politically feasible after a German victory. Although Dutch casualties in manpower had not been heavy, the economic, military, social and moral consequences were high in World War II.

Hitler established a civilian administration staffed by Germans for the occupied territory. The Dutch National Socialist Movement (N.S.B.) was given a free hand in the staging of public demonstrations and the dissemination of propaganda. Political Parties were dissolved and Dutch National Socialists were placed in administrative positions. The Jewish population was segregated, concentrated, and later deported to Poland. The German administration attempted to secure labor for the *Reich* through a series of special actions, including recruitment of certain age groups to be deployed in Germany as manpower in the branches of commerce, industry, and agriculture.

When the Allied armies liberated Belgium during the first days of September 1944, the German administration increased its hostility in the occupied territories. Dutch men of military age were drafted or arrested primarily for fear they might assist the Allied forces. No longer did the Germans attempt to use Dutch factories and other productive facilities, but they transported as much machinery and equipment as possible to Germany.<sup>43</sup> The raw materials and foodstuffs, which the Dutch government had stockpiled as a precautionary measure, was also moved to Germany.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.



The approaching armies of the Western Allies relieved the Netherlands. On May 5, 1944, the surrender of German troops in Holland went into effect at eight o'clock in the morning. Holland was free at last after five years of enemy occupation.

A weak system of collective security, an ineffective policy of neutrality during increasing European tension in the 1930's, and the consequences of World War II on the Dutch nation (i.e., military defeat, overall economic exploitation, and social and moral devastation) led to a rejection of this policy of neutrality by the government in exile. This change of attitude was indicated on radio broadcasts by Foreign Minister van Kleffens from London on November 25, 1942. He declared to his compatriots that the old times were not coming back, that the old policy of no political agreements with any state or group of states could not be resumed. Although this decision was made during the War, closer military collaboration with other countries continued to be carried out afterward.

#### *d. Post-World War II Disorder*

The situation in Europe after World War II, a fear of a growing German threat, a weak system of collective defense with increasing tension between powers, and an emerging Soviet threat all directly influenced decision-making of the Dutch post-war government regarding national security. This process of readjusting Dutch foreign policy resulted in the firm integration of the Netherlands into Western European structures. However, the road from aloofness to collective defense was an indirect one.

In the immediate postwar years, the Netherlands relied upon the general collective security system of the United Nations. This security policy was based on international cooperation between Western powers and the Soviet Union.<sup>45</sup> However, the outbreak of the Cold War in 1946 and increasing disagreement among the Great Powers did not allow for this policy any longer.

(1) *German threat.*

The government also attached great importance to finding an international solution for the German question. In December 1946, foreign minister Van Boetzelaer said: "Prevent[ing] renewed German aggression is our primary aim and in the interest of us all."<sup>46</sup> The Netherlands wanted to make it impossible for Germany to threaten her security again, and decided to influence the German issue through the Brussels Treaty Organization.<sup>47</sup> In 1948, governments of five European countries: Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg signed Brussels Treaty, establishing a military alliance. Similarly to the Dunkirk Treaty of 1947, signed by France and Britain, the Brussels Treaty was directed against Germany.<sup>48</sup> In protest of signing the pact, the Soviet Union blocked

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<sup>45</sup> S.I.P. van Campen, The Quest for Security: Some Aspects of Netherlands Foreign Policy 1945-1950 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1957), p. 30.

<sup>46</sup> Proceedings of the Second Chamber, States General, 1946-47, 16 December 1946, p. 88.

<sup>47</sup> Jan van der Harst, "From Neutrality to Alignment: Dutch Defense Policy, 1945-1951," in NATO: The Founding of the Atlantic Alliance and the Integration of Europe, ed. Francis H. Heller and John R. Gillingham (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), p. 34.

<sup>48</sup> Harst, p. 29 and Baehr, p. 65.

West Berlin in 1948. "The Soviet Union rather than Germany soon came to be recognized as the greater threat."<sup>49</sup>

## (2) *Soviet Threat.*

This threat had at least two dimensions - a military and an ideological one. The fear of the Soviet threat resulted from the sheer weight of the Soviet military. The USSR could mobilize about 150 to 175 divisions (more than 25 of which were elite troops stationed in the eastern part of Germany) against a paltry 14 divisions stationed in Western Europe, two of which were American. The balance of air forces was also disadvantageous to the West: 6,000 Soviet aircraft as opposed to 1,000 aircraft in Western Europe. The US nuclear monopoly in the early postwar period could not counterbalance the Soviet Union's conventional military power. "Even the small number of bombs in the US arsenal meant that America's nuclear deterrent remained a hollow threat during the years that the United States alone had the bomb. And it is likely that the Russians, through espionage, knew well the emptiness of that threat."<sup>50</sup> Moreover, time was passing and the USA soon lost its nuclear monopoly. In August 1949, the Soviet Union exploded its first atomic device.

The ideological dimension of the Soviet threat had two aspects. First was a traditionally deep-rooted sense of democracy among the Dutch. As far back as the days of the Dutch Republic, the Netherlands presented an early model of a democratically ruled nation. It was not a modern democracy, but the men in power were enlightened

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<sup>49</sup> Campen, p. 146.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

autocrats who wisely granted freedom of speech and freedom of religion, and encouraged the founding of private institutions that gave destitute and underprivileged citizens freedom from fear. Suppression of liberating thought was never a part of their policy. Thus, the notion of the Soviet "People's Democracy" was totally unacceptable to the Netherlands.

Second, the democratic world feared the spread of communism to the West. Soviet support of subversive activity on the part of communist parties in Western Europe was what the cabinet feared most.<sup>51</sup> In 1947 the Cominform was created, communist-inspired strikes broke out in France and Italy, and Moscow gained control over several East European countries while exerting pressure in Turkey, Greece and various parts of Asia.<sup>52</sup> These fears of communism along with the strong Soviet military presence in Europe generated the notion of a significant Soviet threat in Dutch politics.

Both sharing bitter experiences with German expansion, Europe and the Netherlands (as a part of Europe) focused on setting a world order in the post World War II era, such that would eliminate any renewed German threat. This was accomplished by establishing the Brussels Treaty organization. Soon afterward, the emerging Soviet threat soon received priority in the security decision-making process of western democracies. They founded the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1949 as a political and military defense coalition to counterbalance the Soviet military weight and to contain communism.

These two basic facts of post World War II Europe, along with the particular consequences of World War II to Dutch society, challenged the Dutch decision makers.

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<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.



They, in response to a mosaic of experiences from national history, started the process of adjusting the Dutch foreign policy away from neutrality. This process led to a climax in 1949, when the Netherlands became member of NATO.

## **2. Geo-strategic Situation**

Dr. Ronald P. Barston has underlined the importance of the following variable for a small state's security: "The freedom of maneuver of a small state may be restricted by its strategic location."<sup>53</sup> This situation fully applies to the Dutch case. The factors that are included in a description of the Dutch geo-strategic situation actually determine some of the decision-making constraints for the Dutch policy makers. The following is a brief description of the main aspects of such a situation that illustrate this argument best.

The Netherlands is a small country with geographic position at the crossroads of Western Europe.<sup>54</sup> Its location among three Great Powers - Britain, France, Prussia, and later on Germany - has influenced the Dutch security situation throughout modern history. The Netherlands is a compact country of the size slightly less than twice the size of New Jersey (33,936 sq. km. or 13,103 sq. mil.). It lies in the lowland of northern Europe. The country is justly called a low country, for half of its territory lies below the high-water levels of its many rivers and of the bordering North Sea. Close to 60% of the population live in dikes - protected areas.

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<sup>53</sup> Ronald P. Barston, The Other Powers, (New York: Barnes&Noble, 1973) p. 20.

<sup>54</sup> Vandenbosch, p. 2.



The Netherlands, with ports ranking third in the World in terms of cargo handled, is called the gateway for Western Europe's trade with the world. The Netherlands is the world's third-ranking producer of natural gas and has the sixth-richest reserves.<sup>55</sup> Most of these data have changed only slightly with time.

The main elements of the Dutch geo-strategic situation are its location along major European sea lines, its location among larger European neighbors, its role as a strategic entry and exit point in military campaigns, its natural geographic vulnerability, and its natural resources.

First, the location of the country on the sea lines, rivers and land roads of Western Europe significantly influenced Dutch security. The Netherlands controlled goods shipments to all three Great Powers with vital importance for Germany. The Netherlands, as the territorial sovereign over the Rhine, was used as a transit country for the trade of the Rhineland and that of northeastern France to the rest of the world.<sup>56</sup>

Great Britain and the United States, aware of the strategic importance of the Netherlands against Germany in World War I, imposed an economic embargo on the neutral Netherlands and blocked eighty-six Dutch vessels laden with foodstuffs and cereals in British and American ports at the end of 1917. In 1939 Rotterdam's total shipping tonnage was 57 million tons, of which nearly 23 millions tons was transit trught to and from Germany. This caused severe hunger among the relatively large Dutch population because

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<sup>55</sup> "Netherlands," The World Factbook (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1995), p. 300.

<sup>56</sup> J. Anton de Haas, "Holland's Role in World Trade," in The Netherlands ed. Robert J. Kerner (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1946) p. 171.

of a lack of foodstuffs. To avoid the mistake made in World War I when Germany did not have control over shipping of supplies to the Rhineland, Germany invaded the Netherlands in 1940 and set up a German administration over the Dutch territory.

The location of a country among larger competitive powers is another important factor for a small state. This handicap helped shape Dutch security in two ways. First, the Netherlands has historically been considered a state capable of contributing to equilibrium among the powers of France, Britain, Prussia, and later on Germany. This balancing role of Netherlands was formally confirmed by the Congress of Vienna<sup>57</sup> in 1815, when the Netherlands was united with Belgium to create a buffer state.<sup>58</sup>

The third strategic aspect resulting from the location of the Netherlands at the crossroads of western Europe has been the function of the Netherlands as a strategic access and/or departure point in war campaigns among powers. Napoleon annexed the Netherlands in 1806 as part of his strategic move to the east, the same year, he defeated Prussian and Russian forces at Friedland, near Königsberg in eastern Prussia.

Great Britain, on the other hand, has not really had continental ambitions in recent history; however, it has tried to use the Netherlands in its drive for maintaining a naval advantage in war. Indeed, it was Britain who pursued the creation of a buffer state at the mouth of the Rhine in order to restrict any direct approach to the channel by the Germans. This fear was justified, since the Netherlands played an important role in German military

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<sup>57</sup> Fred L. Israel, Major Peace Treaties of Modern History 1648 - 1967, (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1967), vol. I, p. 549.

<sup>58</sup> Vandenbosch, p.3.

plans. The plans of von Schlieffen, General Chief of Staff of the German army 1899 to 1906, called for marching throughout Holland on two fronts in case of war. General von Moltke, successor to von Schlieffen and Chief of Staff at the outbreak of World War I, changed the plan in 1909 by eliminating from it the march through Holland.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, Hitler successfully returned to von Schlieffen's plans in 1940, when he annexed the Netherlands in a five-day *Blitzkrieg*. Thus, both Great Britain and Germany have held the position of the Netherlands in high strategic regard.

The flat lowlands of the country are yet another aspect that affects geo-strategic situation of the Netherlands. The fact that 60% of the population lives on territory below sea level sharply increases the country's vulnerability in case of an armed conflict.

In fact, the Netherlands came to understand this all too clearly in World War II. In the final days of the war, the Germans flooded an area of fertile land in the province of Noord-Holland, which is located below sea level and had been reclaimed from the sea since World War I. The inundations covered approximately eight percent of the total agricultural acreage of the Netherlands. About one-third of the inundated soil was covered with sea water. Where sea water was allowed to flood the land, effective reclamation of the soil was bound to take a great deal of time.<sup>60</sup>

Lastly, the strategic resources of natural gas are a further factor resulting from the location of the Netherlands. The great importance of this aspect was expressed by Richard E Bissell, research fellow at the American University's School of International Service,

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<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120.

<sup>60</sup> Wormbrunn, p. 78.

when he pointed out that “resources as a cause of conflict predate human society.”<sup>61</sup> Since the Slochteren gas field near Groningen (among the largest active fields in the World) was brought into production in 1959, this factor could not have been relevant in the early postwar security policy of the Dutch. Its relevance, however, increased later on in the forming of the Dutch security and defense policy during the Cold War era.

The geo-strategic situation of a small state is a very important aspect of its security. The Netherlands endures a number of disadvantages from this point of view. The Netherlands is located at the crossroads of Western Europe, connecting the Great powers and controlling their supplies. Furthermore, the location of the country among France, Britain, Prussia and, later on, Germany was a determining factor in Dutch security, as Dutch territory has served as an equilibrium point for balancing powers and as a strategic access point in war campaigns among the Powers. Also, the low and flat terrain of the Netherlands, sharply increases the general vulnerability of the Netherlands. These factors of the Dutch geo-strategic situation helped influence the reorientation of the Dutch policy from neutrality to alignment.

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<sup>61</sup> Richard E. Bissell, “The Resource Dimension of International Conflict” in Managing GlobalChaos, ed. Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela All (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1996), p. 141.



### 3. Economic Factors

The question of economic development often takes priority in the foreign policy of small states.<sup>62</sup> These states usually do not have sufficient resources which would allow them to face any economic sanctions imposed by the Great Powers in the case of a diametrically different foreign policy on the part of the smaller state. Thus, for a small state to develop its economic, security, and defense policies under an economic and security umbrella of the Great Powers would be fruitful.

The Netherlands learned just such a lesson: that economic objectives are met only within a dependable security system. By not respecting this basic knowledge, by underestimating the need of a dependable security system, and by adjusting its foreign policy to changes too slowly, the Dutch were left prone to a violent interruption of its economic plans by an aggressor. Subsequently, foreign rule exploited the Dutch economy. The need to recover economically and increase defense capability, while an external threat was growing, led to a reorientation the Dutch foreign policy after World War II. Eventually, disharmony between the economic policy and the security system, economic exploitation of the country during the period of dependence, and a plan for economic recovery led the Dutch post World War II government to join a military alliance with the other western democracies.

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<sup>62</sup> Barston, p. 24. "The foreign policy of many small states is dominated by the question of economic development."



a. *Economic Policy vs. The Security System*

The building of Dutch economic prosperity was interrupted by the German invasion. The invasion, in turn, was a direct consequence of discord between Dutch economic policies and the Dutch security system.

The Dutch economy had been traditionally based on foreign trade and commerce, but had declined in power over the course of World War I. Gradually however, the Netherlands began to regain its former prosperity, and in 1928 per capita international trade, excluding transit shipments, amounted to \$244, exceeding that of all other countries. Belgium could muster only \$218, England \$215, and the United States \$78 per capita.<sup>63</sup>

As a result of this growing trade, the merchant marine expanded rapidly. By 1929, it ranked eighth among the world's merchant marines, exceeded only by England, the United States, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, and Norway.<sup>64</sup> The Netherlands imported from its colonies tea, sugar, tobacco, spice, tin, bauxite, copper, and rubber, and then reexported these products down the European continent. Also, a very large percentage of its manufacturing industry operated principally for export. The percentage of industrial products in total exports of the country had reached 60% before the war.<sup>65</sup> A crucial part of this export and reexport went to Germany. In the five years preceding World War II, between 14 and 20 percent of all Dutch exports went to Germany.

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<sup>63</sup> Haas, p. 171.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 172.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

The Netherlands imported goods from Germany as well. In the same period, between a fourth and a fifth of all Dutch imports (in value) came from Germany. At their peak, nearly a third of all Dutch imports came from Germany in 1931, and in 1934 a fourth of Netherlands exports went to Germany. Aside from this earlier level of mutual commerce, one half of Rotterdam's total shipping tonnage in 1939 was transit to and from Germany.<sup>66</sup> Such a close economic cooperation with Germany, however, excluded the possibility of remaining neutral in the case of a conflict between powers.

Despite the fact that Dutch trade with the United Kingdom was almost as large, there was no reason to hope that the World War I miracle, when the Netherlands was spared direct military attack, could be repeated. In World War II, Germany was very concerned with the strategic importance of Holland. Britain has rarely had any reason to expand into the continent. Thus, any potential threat in the case of a conflict among the Powers could only really come from Germany, as the strategic importance of the Netherlands was not equally important to both powers. On one hand, if Britain had annexed the Netherlands, the next step would have been Germany. On the other hand, by occupying Holland, Germany would have controlled the channel. The British trust in their strength as an isolated island and their consequent lower concern for Dutch neutrality could not counterbalance Germany's concern for ensuring a fluent supply to the Rhineland through the Dutch ports. The Netherlands did not learn its lesson from World War I in that regard. Insisting on a policy of neutrality, the Netherlands did not ensure sufficient security for its economic policy.

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<sup>66</sup> Vandenbosch, p. 275.

*b. Economic exploitation*

The Dutch under the German occupation of 1940-1945 is a classical example of “ [h]ow the territory of the small state can be used - exploited - by another great power in the execution of sinister designs.”<sup>67</sup>

The state of war existing between Germany and the Allies imposed a heavy economic burden on the Netherlands, quite apart from the expenses of mobilization. Transit trade with Germany practically ceased as a result of the British blockade in 1940. War conditions made it more difficult to secure raw materials for the Dutch industry. Dutch ships were sunk by mines in the English Channel and elsewhere. As a result of these conditions, the total volume of industrial and commercial activity decreased. Furthermore, unemployment rose despite the fact that approximately 300,000 men were mobilized.<sup>68</sup>

After the occupation began, Hitler established a German supervisory civilian administration for the occupied territory. Although the total quantity of industrial production dropped throughout the occupation until in 1944 it was less than half that of 1939, the value of exports to Germany doubled in 1940 over the level of 1938, and more than tripled over 1938 for the four subsequent war years. This was mainly due to wholesale removal of supplies and requisitioned clothing, bicycles, furniture, etc.

After September 1944 most factories ceased operations for lack of fuel and transportation. It has been estimated that, in January 1945, the level of production was only

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<sup>67</sup> Olaf V. Knudsen, “Analysing Small-State Security: The Role of External Factors,” in Small States and the Security Challenge in the New Europe, ed. Werner Bauwens, et. al. ( London and Washington, DC: Brassey’s, 1996), p. 10.

<sup>68</sup> Warmbrunn, p. 5.

25 percent that of 1938. Moreover, since the German war machine needed more and more manpower, the Germans also drafted labor from the Netherlands. By the end of the war, between 300,000 and 400,000 Dutchmen were at work in the German Reich, exclusive of prisoners of war and the imprisoned Jews.

Before the end of the War, Hitler ordered a “scorched earth” policy involving either the removal to Germany or the outright destruction of industries and transportation facilities which might be of use to the Allies. Some of the worst demolitions took place in the harbor of Rotterdam, where approximately 40 percent of the total pier area and warehouse space was destroyed.

After the invasion at Normandy, and the Germans destroyed the dikes and flooded the land, the soil was inundated. The circulation of paper money increased almost fourfold from April, 1941 to May 1, 1945. Taxation of annual income almost doubled from 1940 to 1944. By Werner Warmbrunn, 1944 the average cost of living had risen by approximately 50% over the base year 1938-39. The cost of food rose by about 60% during the same period, while wages were frozen in 1940.<sup>69</sup> Such heavy exploitation of the Dutch economy as a direct consequence of a weak security system had a pivotal influence on the reorientation of the Dutch foreign policy in the postwar years.

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., pp. 67-82.



c. *Economic recovery*

The Dutch plan for economic recovery suggested that the Dutch, post World War II government join a military alliance with the other western democracies for at least three reasons. First, the Dutch cabinet was convinced that priority should be given to the reconstruction of the financial and economic stability of the country. Military readiness could be postponed until a later date.<sup>70</sup> Thus, a military coalition with other democracies was an easy way to increase defense capability without spending additional money.<sup>71</sup>

Second, the Netherlands put effort into the creation of regional institutions for economic cooperation, and it attached great value to the successful development of the Benelux customs union, established in 1944.<sup>72</sup> To avoid the mistakes of the prewar period - an inharmonious economic policy and security system - the Netherlands covered the economic union by one security umbrella. Hence, joining a Brussels Treaty seemed to be a highly rationale step.

Finally, the US Congress approved a European Recovery Program, known as the Marshall Plan, in the amount of \$23 billion,<sup>73</sup> as a part of the Truman Doctrine for

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<sup>70</sup> Harst, p. 30.

<sup>71</sup> Harst, p. 34. "[t]he Netherlands participated in the Brussels Treaty to involve the United States in the Defense of Western Europe. In addition to the obvious military benefits, the Dutch recognized that an American contribution would enable them to reduce their own defense expenditures."

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>73</sup> Robert D. Schulzinger, *American Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 210.



the containment of communism.<sup>74</sup> Participating in the Marshall Plan thus offered a double benefit to the strongly anticommunist cabinet of the Netherlands.<sup>75</sup>

However, considering the acceptance of the Marshall plan involved a cost and benefit analysis, since the US administration was not hesitating to use the Marshall Plan, at the same time, as a useful tool in its “carrot and stick” policy. The Americans pressed for a Dutch retreat from Indonesia and insisted that Indonesian republics be granted their independence. They threatened to cut off not only military assistance to the Netherlands, but also that part of the Marshall Plan aid which was meant for Indonesia.<sup>76</sup>

Economic factors also played an important role in Dutch postwar decision-making. Discord between the economic policy and security system, the economic exploitation of the country during the German occupation, and the plan for an economic recovery were the factors which influenced this process the most.

## **B. POSITION-BUILDING MODULATORS**

The security and defense policy of a specific state and its strategic political culture are the main agents that form a state’s reputation in the eyes of its allies. By attaining a good position within a military coalition as a result of such a good reputation, a small state

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<sup>74</sup> Cecil V. Crabb, The Doctrines of American Foreign Policy, (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), p. 107.

<sup>75</sup> Harst, p. 30.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

increases its chances to survive in times of crisis. Moreover, an applied national security and defense policy can persuade armed partners to respect a small state's position in the Alliance.

## **1. Security and Defense Policy**

The implementation of a small state's security and defense policy in peacetime requires the confluence of a broad, complex number of opinions, and practical provisions. In order to simplify this complexity, it is useful to define a few crucial points. The main factors serving to determine the security and defense policy of a sovereign member are its level of policy coordination with the strategic concepts of the alliance; the level and structure of the mutual defense cooperation among the coalition partners; the state's share of the risk in times of collective defense or other missions; and its share of the burden in the effort to build credible defense capabilities for the coalition. The Dutch security and defense policy is an example of a rational approach to this position-building process.

### ***a. Policy Coordination***

For the healthy working of a military alliance, it is important for the alliance's members to reach very close agreement on one strategic concept and to adjust their respective national defense policies as close to this concept as possible. On one hand, deviant defense policy alternatives are not helpful but harmful, particularly to the security of a small state. On other hand, small states are afraid of losing their sovereignty. However, the small state, though reluctant to conform to coalition policy in peacetime, is not strong

enough in times of crisis to face an aggressor's power unilaterally on its own, especially in the nuclear age. The Netherlands, aware of these constraints on a small state, subordinated its policy fully to NATO's strategic concept of deterrence and flexible response<sup>77</sup>:

Throughout the first 20 years or so of NATO's existence, the Netherlands almost totally subordinated national goals to NATO and U.S. security policies. In fact, it was even argued that 'national interest [was] not a concept of much relevance to Dutch foreign policy,'<sup>78</sup> and that Dutch security policy was, for all practical purposes, virtually nonexistent.<sup>79</sup>

The Dutch defense policy was tightly bound to NATO not only in the Cold War era, but also during detente. While disarmament negotiations among superpowers reduced the quantity of armaments on the European continent, NATO continued developing the quality of its defense systems as a continuation of its "dual-track" policy.<sup>80</sup> During the 1984-1993 planning period, each of the Dutch armed services was supposed to complete modernization programs, thus giving the Netherlands the most modern armed forces in NATO.<sup>81</sup> After the end of the Cold War, without regard to the emerging options within a prospectively new European security system, the Netherlands continued to conduct policy

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<sup>77</sup> Lawrence S. Kaplan, NATO and the United States (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994), p. 92.

<sup>78</sup> Jan G. Siccama, "The Netherlands Depillarized: Security Policy in a New Domestic Context," in NATO's Northern Allies: The National Security Policies of Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Norway, ed. Gregory Flynn (Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman & Allanheld, 1985), p. 117.

<sup>79</sup> Bitzinger, p. 197.

<sup>80</sup> Kaplan, p. 134.

<sup>81</sup> Harst, p. 281.

in accordance with NATO's strategic concept agreed to at the North Atlantic Council's Roma summit of 1991."<sup>82</sup>

The January, 1993 issue of *Dutch Defense Priorities Review* spells out the new defense policy: the Netherlands has built new armed forces which can be deployed immediately in peacetime and in crisis situations, and can operate more effectively.<sup>83</sup> Promoting such a tight policy relative to NATO's strategic concepts contributed to Holland's "place in the sun" within the Alliances's structures.

#### ***b. Defense Cooperation***

Promoting mutual cooperation occupies a place of importance in terms of confidence-building measures among allies. The Dutch government has contributed in this regard since the very beginning of its alignment. The Netherlands and Belgium focused on communications between headquarters, common armaments production and procurement, the sharing of training camps and artillery ranges, the furnishing of Dutch troops to Belgian maneuvers (and vice-versa), closer cooperation between Dutch and Belgian military schools, and exchanges of officer trainees.<sup>84</sup> Later on, this cooperation was extended to other allies. Nevertheless, the Benelux regional scope is a cornerstone of Dutch-NATO

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<sup>82</sup> "The Alliance's New Strategic Concept." Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.nato.int/html>. 20 July, 1997.

<sup>83</sup> "Objectives and tasks of the Ministry of Defense" in Dutch Ministry of Defense. Available HTTP: <http://www.mindef.nl/html>. 4 September, 1997.

<sup>84</sup> Harst, p. 33.



cooperation. In the second half of the 1980's, about one-third of Dutch pilot trainees were trained in Belgium.

In addition, the Netherlands participated in production and co-production of F-16 and Leopard tanks and other projects.<sup>85</sup> However, the ratification of the EC's Maastricht Treaty on economic and political union did not generate a strong sentiment for European defense policy in the Netherlands. The Netherlands participates neither in the *Eurocorps*, inaugurated by France and Germany in 1992 (unlike Luxembourg and Belgium), nor in EUROMARFOR, the European Maritime Force (unlike Portugal).<sup>86</sup> Instead, on March 30, 1994, the Netherlands signed an agreement with Germany providing for the creation of a 30,000-strong Dutch-German joint force that would be fully integrated into NATO and open to other NATO members.

Moreover, the Netherlands promotes cooperation among Central and East European countries within the "Partnership for Peace" program,<sup>87</sup> and helps to generate an increasing level of military cooperation, transparency and interoperability between NATO and Partner forces.<sup>88</sup> The broad scope of Dutch collaboration within the Alliance is an example of how much a small state can contribute in that regard.

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<sup>85</sup> Domke, p. 290.

<sup>86</sup> Charles L. Barry, "Creating a European Security and Defense Identity," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Spring 1997.

<sup>87</sup> "Partnership for Peace." Online. Available HTTP: <http://www.nato.int/html>. 20 July, 1997.

<sup>88</sup> Nick Williams, "Partnership for Peace: Permanent Fixture or Declining Asset?," *Survival*, vol. 38, no. 1, Spring 1996, p. 98.



*c. Risks Sharing*

Commitment to collective defense and the expansion of that to the level of collective security also brings with it certain kinds of risks that had been diminished under the policy of neutrality. A small state in the Alliance is expected to share, for example, in tasks resulting from nuclear deterrence policies, or in tasks resulting from troop deployment in areas outside of NATO.

Indeed, the Netherlands is experienced in both tasks. As far as strategy of nuclear deterrence, the Netherlands was willing to share risks:

The Dutch government has a record of active participation in alliance policy making and, more importantly, of loyal fulfilment of alliance responsibilities to the best of its abilities. This has meant a commitment to the alliance strategy of flexible response, in which Dutch forces are deployed in the forward areas of Germany and, the recent decision to the contrary [sic], assigned their share of six nuclear tasks.<sup>89</sup>

In addition to this highly positive Dutch attitude toward NATO's nuclear policy, it must be mentioned that the Netherlands' commitments were never stretched. It is true that the debate on the deployment of intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) (in the form of forty-eight U.S. cruise missiles) in the Netherlands pushed the Dutch commitment to NATO policy to its upper limits. Indeed, according to Professor William K. Domke, "[t]he Dutch government committed itself to the December 1979 NATO INF decision, but it took until November 1985 before it decided to deploy the missiles."<sup>90</sup> Moreover, as events and crises outside Europe throughout the 1970's raised issues of military operations

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<sup>89</sup> Domke, p. 275.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 285.

and contingency planning for areas beyond NATO's command theaters, the Netherlands, together with several other European states, insisted on the contingency that NATO's "out-of-area" must be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.<sup>91</sup> However, this objection did not serve as an obstacle to the Netherlands in its commitment to deploy 105 soldiers in the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) on the Sinai Peninsula in April, 1982.

Another example comes from September, 1984. At the time, two Dutch Alkmaar-class minesweepers arrived in the Red Sea and searched six weeks for anti-ship mines used in the Iran-Iraq conflict. In this case, the operation in the out-of-NATO-area was considered an important defensive measure to remove dangers to international shipping.<sup>92</sup> Later on, the Netherlands made a naval contribution to the US-led UN coalition in Gulf War of 1991, and to the 1996 NATO-led peace force (SFOR) in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Netherlands contributed to SFOR with approximately 1,500 troops.

#### *d. Burden Sharing*

Burden-sharing is one of the major limits a small state faces in a large coalition due to its more or less limited GDP. Thanks to a relatively healthy economy, the Netherlands is now a solvent contributor to NATO's programs. However, attaining this status was not automatic, as the early Dutch alignment required a consumption of security at their allies' expense.

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<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 288.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 289.

In the years 1948-1950 in fact, the Dutch lacked even a single standing division. The government preferred to continue planning for the financial and economic reconstruction of the country, while maintaining the defense budget at a supposedly low level of 850 million guilders for 1949. This was about about 5.1 percent of GNP at the time, which, interestingly however, was relatively greater than at any time since 1815.<sup>93</sup>

During a November 1948 visit to Holland, UK Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery urged the Dutch to begin building up their army within the Allied framework. He asked for an army corps of three divisions by the end of 1951. However:

The political will to increase military efforts was, in reality, lacking. In March 1949, the cabinet approved a defense plan running to 1956, the so-called 'Lagerplan 1950,' that required an increase in neither the budget nor the length of military service. The implementation of the Montgomery plan was thereby postponed indefinitely.<sup>94</sup>

These burdent-sharing limits were evident in other ways as well at this early stage of the Netherlands' membership in NATO, as the Dutch government, consistently without regard to an ever-increasing Soviet threat, proceeded with the single-minded economic recovery of their country.<sup>95</sup>

At the outbreak of the Korean War (one of most important dividing lines in the Cold War) however, one can see a significant turning point in the Netherlands' alignment. In March, 1951, after long and complicated discussions, the government finally yielded to US pressure and increased the defense budget from fl. 850 million to fl. 1,500

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<sup>93</sup> Harst, p. 33.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

million a year. Harst concludes that “[t]wo years after the creation of NATO, the Netherlands had eventually become a faithful member of the alliance, prepared to meet NATO requirements, i.e., to have five divisions ready by 1954.”<sup>96</sup>

Heavy industrialization of the country and the previous preference for financial and economic stability in the postwar period allowed for a rather steady allocation of budgetary resources for defense during the 1960's and 1970's. From 1965 to 1970, cuts in the size of the armed forces led to a drop in defense expenditure from 4 percent to 3.5 percent of GNP. Since 1970, however, spending has not dropped below 3.3 percent of GNP.<sup>97</sup>

In May, 1997 moreover, the final *communiqué* of the North Atlantic Council called for a long-term defense programme to revitalize the alliance through the improvement of conventional and nuclear deterrence forces. The Netherlands agreed to rectify serious deficiencies in joint defense arrangements and aim for a three-percent, after-inflation increase in defense spending as a way to provide the resources needed to improve capabilities. The defense budgets for 1979 through 1983 were also based on a commitment to three-percent growth, which caused the Netherlands to build the most modern armed forces in NATO.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>97</sup> Netherlands Ministry of Defense, “Main Financial Figures on Defense” (The Hague: Directorate-General Economie en Financien, 1984), p.29.

<sup>98</sup> Domke, p. 281.



Alongside the development of defense programs, the Dutch economy allowed for generous welfare programs, which did not enable the Dutch government to respond flexibly to a request in 1985 by the Reagan administration for approval and financial participation in the research and development portion of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Because Germany refused direct participation in this project and the fact that following *detente* and disarmament, policies between superpowers led to the end of the SDI project, this reluctance by the Dutch did not hold serious consequences for their image of a reliable partner among allies.

The economy grew at a real average annual rate of 1.9 percent over the decade between 1985 and 1994, but relatively costly public expenditures and consequential deficit financing were exacerbated by a recession in 1992-1993. During this period unemployment rose to over eight percent. Expansion resumed in 1994-1996, with unemployment falling to less than 7 percent by late 1996 and inflation remaining low at around 2.5 percent.<sup>99</sup> This optimistic economic development together with military reform enabled the Netherlands to meet expectations on burden-sharing. As Bitzinger notes:

For a small nation, the Netherlands endeavors to maintain a well-rounded, three-service military, and for the most part the Dutch have worked hard to live up to their Alliance defense commitments. They have purchased sophisticated weapons systems and kept their military standards and professionalism high. Indeed, the Dutch armed forces are a good example of the kind of security contribution a small nation can make to the Alliance.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Arthur S. Banks, et. al., Political Handbook of the World: 1997 (New York: The Research Foundation of the State University of New York, 1997), p. 594.

<sup>100</sup> Bitzinger, p. 208.



Despite the initial reluctance to allocate sufficient material and financial sources to increase defense capabilities, the Netherlands increased its contributions step by step, and watched its level vigilantly in comparison to other allies. This policy tremendously contributed to the good position of the Dutch among its allies.

The Netherlands, during its NATO membership, carried out a transparent security and defense policy, closely bound to NATO strategy, and devoid of any alternative doctrines of solely national concern. This political platform was supported by a developed level of defense cooperation, and the Dutch willingness to share risks and its fair burden of the collective defense. This security and defense policy helped generate the high level of the Dutch in the Alliance that can be seen today.

## **2. Strategic Political Culture**

The main factors that define strategic political culture are 1) degree of political consensus on basic principles of security and defense policy; 2) public support by political elites for that kind of policy; and 3) the amount of support among the citizens. This variable does not refer exclusively to the category of small states. The relationship between strategic political culture, on one hand, and security and defense policy, on the other, is mutually interactive. The security and defense policy generates a certain kind of strategic political culture, and strategic political culture forms certain characteristics of the security and defense policy.

*a. Political Consensus*

Since 1949, The Netherlands has enjoyed broad domestic consensus on national security policy and the country's role within the Alliance.<sup>101</sup> Dutch society and politics were centered around traditional institutions called "pillars," which included the church, the labor movement, and other ideological subsocieties.<sup>102</sup> The pillars were composed of Christian (Reformed and Catholic churches), Socialist/Labor, and Liberal elements (comprising secular opponents to the Socialistic bloc and, contrary to its name, occupying the right wing on the national political spectrum). These pillars formed the base for the social and political life of this country.<sup>103</sup> Bitzinger notes, "Whatever the composition of the coalition in power, national policy tended to vary little from government to government."<sup>104</sup> With a such a high priority on the need for consensus and governability, the parties agreed upon three basic concerns: continuation and expansion of the welfare state, government subsidy of the domestic economy, and, especially, support for the Western alliance.<sup>105</sup>

Despite a certain left-right polarization in Dutch society since the mid-1960's, the domestic consensus that formed around Dutch entry and commitment to

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<sup>101</sup> Bitzinger, p. 195.

<sup>102</sup> Siccama, p. 134-135.

<sup>103</sup> Bitzinger, p. 198.

<sup>104</sup> Bitzinger, p. 198.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., p. 198-199.

NATO has endured.<sup>106</sup> From 1967 to 1982, among the political parties, only the small Pacifist-Socialist Party unconditionally rejects NATO. The other small parties of the left are openly critical of NATO. Among the major parties in 1975, the PvdA (Labor) congress staked continued NATO membership on progress toward *detente*. The other parties actively support membership in NATO; over ninety percent of CDA (Christian Democratic Party) and VVD (Liberal) party members favor NATO.<sup>107</sup>

However, a debate over the 1979 NATO decision to deploy cruise missiles has pointed out the potential vulnerability of the consensus on security policy.<sup>108</sup> The Socialist/Labor element of the political spectrum, as in Germany and other western European countries, turned this debate into a tool of their populist policy, which undermined an initially strong political consensus in Dutch society.<sup>109</sup>

Since that time, military spending has become a gauge of widening or narrowing political unity regarding NATO. The discussions over long-term defense plans has made defense policy decision-making a much more public issue. As Bitzinger notes, "With the widening of the security debate and with the defense budget coming under much

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<sup>106</sup> Domke, p. 276.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 271.

<sup>108</sup> Siccama, p. 113-170.

<sup>109</sup> Josef Joffe, The Limited Partnership (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1987), p.112.

closer scrutiny, both domestic defense policy and overall NATO doctrine became a more open process, subject to wider pressures from more disparate interests.”<sup>110</sup>

***b. Public Support of Political Leaders***

Government officials are almost uniformly supportive of NATO membership. The Foreign Ministry conducts security policy in the context of NATO and has never been in a position to develop an alternative security policy. The dominant political figure in this regard was Foreign Minister J. A. Luns. He has been a member of the Cabinet for almost nineteen years (1952- 1971). The Dutch Policy under his leadership always emphasized European integration and the strengthening of Atlantic co-operation. Foreign Minister Luns was appointed as Secretary-General of NATO in 1971 and has become the symbol of pro-American foreign policy.<sup>111</sup>

He was not the only one, however. In the person of Foreign Minister Dirk U. Stikker, later a Secretary-General of NATO and leader of a number of Dutch committees and subcommittees in NATO, Mr. Luns found a successor to his Euro-Atlantic security and defense policy. When the ability to come to any decision in case of cruise missile deployment was complicated, there was Foreign Minister van den Broek, who “enthusiastically supported full deployment according to NATO policy.”<sup>112</sup> The firm linkages to US foreign policy have also been supported by the current Minister of Defense,

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<sup>110</sup> Bitzinger, p. 202.

<sup>111</sup> Baehr, p. 87.

<sup>112</sup> Domke, p. 287.

whose educational and working backgrounds took place in the USA (a PhD from John Hopkins University and work at the World Bank in Washington, DC, respectively). He desires that Dutch defense reform be tied closely to NATO's structural changes in the spirit of "A New Strategic Concept."

*c. Support of Citizens*

As Bitzinger has noted, "[n]ot only political parties but also trade unions, schools, newspapers, broadcasting, hospitals, and even soccer teams were organized along the lines of the pillars."<sup>113</sup> The strong support among the citizens to alignment gave political figures a mandate to deal positively with the Alliance on a long-term basis. An overwhelming majority of the Dutch population - some 75 to 80 percent - has consistently supported their country's membership in NATO. In general the Dutch perceive the NATO alliance as their best guarantee for Western security.<sup>114</sup> In a 1988 poll of the Dutch Atlantic Commission, 46 percent of the Dutch population said "No" to a European defense without American participation.<sup>115</sup>

According to Bitzinger, "Conceptually, the public's and domestic elites' embrace of several principles of the traditional security consensus remains intact. Support for the Western Alliance remains high, as does the acceptance of an adequate national

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<sup>113</sup> Bitzinger, p. 198.

<sup>114</sup> Peter M. E. Volten, "Dutch Defense Options," in European Security Policy After the Revolutions of 1989, ed. Jeffrey Simon (Washington, DC: The National Defense University Press, 1991), p. 399.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p. 401.



defense and the need to fulfill one's commitments to NATO."<sup>116</sup> However, as the nuclear debate showed, the traditional political consensus on security and defense issues is not perfectly uniform in the application of domestic policy, which, nevertheless, did not have a very negative impact on long-term position of the Dutch in NATO.

There has been a characteristically strong consensus among Dutch political parties on the basic principles of security and defense policy since the very beginning of the Netherlands' membership in the Atlantic Alliance. The strong pro-Alliance personality of the Dutch officials and their permanent and decisive public support for the Alliance has generated among its citizens a great deal of support for a Dutch security and defense policy, subordinated to the NATO strategy. Together with the transparent security and defense policy of the Dutch, this general political culture, characterized by strong political consensus, decisive support of political officials, and the widespread support of the Dutch people, is the main position-building modulator that has contributed to the respectable position of the Netherlands among its Allies.

### **C. CONCLUSION: THE POSITION OF THE NETHERLANDS IN NATO**

The Netherlands was chosen as an example of a small state's effective security and defense policy within NATO. Through permanent increases of its own defense capabilities by affordably building strong armed forces, a small country can attain a respectful position in the Alliance, thus generating maximal security benefits to the small state.

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<sup>116</sup> Bitzinger, p. 203.

In having accomplished this goal, the Netherlands has twice occupied the position of Secretary General of NATO, twice the position of Deputy Secretary General, once Director of the Private Office of the Secretary General, and once Assistant Secretary. Other small countries do not have such a record. Only Belgium occupied the position of the Secretary General once for a full-working period, and Norway once occupied the position of Assistant Secretary. The Dutch officials have also occupied a number of positions in various committees and subcommittees in the NATO political structure.

The Netherlands is also traditionally considered a mediator between Anglo-Saxons and strong pro-Europeans in finding compromises. Because of this policy, the Netherlands deserves a label of reliable ally, a title which the Dutch have indeed enjoyed for the many decades of their NATO membership. The Netherlands has always been finding solutions and compromises, and has never pushed its own defense agenda alone against their Allies' will. Such a clean image in other eyes of the other allies and such a firm positioning in NATO structures has allowed the Netherlands to maintain an active role in the decision-making process.

While cleverly counting the costs and risks of NATO membership, and comparing them with the benefits, the Netherlands has come to generate security "profits" from its membership in this collective defense organization. Logically, one must ask the following questions: What contributed to this position the most? And what are the current limits and opportunities (advantages) of this highly profitable attitude of the Netherlands?

## **1. Dutch Limits**

The limits derived from its history, its geo-strategic situation and its economic situation are some of those which influenced the Dutch decision to reorient its national foreign policy from neutrality to alignment. On the other hand, some of these limits, including historical limits, have changed over time and developed new aspects.

### ***a. Historical Limits***

Dutch history provides its political decision makers with at least five reasons why they should promote the policy of being a reliable NATO member. First, the Netherlands has become a small power in international relations. The Netherlands is a small state not only with respect to its physical size, but also with respect to its military, political and economic power. Second, its policy of neutrality was not effective enough to isolate the Netherlands dependably from major European conflicts of the 20th century. Third, loss of state sovereignty, and other political, economic, military, social, and cultural consequences of the German occupation placed high priority on the issues of defense and security in Dutch policy making. Fourth, the Dutch people found NATO to be a useful institution in solving their security concerns for the entire Cold War era. Finally, NATO's flexibility to adjust its concept to the uncertain post Cold War world and its ability to become a pillar of the new European security architecture persuaded the Dutch to maintain a policy of alignment in NATO.

*b. Geo - Strategic Limits*

The Dutch geo-strategic situation is characterized by five factors. First, the Netherlands is small. Second, the Netherlands is located on the western European trade crossroads. Third, the country is located among three major competitive European powers. Fourth, a great portion of the land is below sea level. Finally, the country possesses a strategic deposits of natutal resources.

*c. Economic Limits*

It is disputable whether we are dealing with economic limits at all in the Dutch case. On one hand, the GDP is limited due to “smallness.” On the other hand, generally positive economic indicators suggest an advantage relative to comparable states. Nevertheless, there have been four main elements of the Dutch economy that have influenced Dutch policy in NATO. First, the Dutch experienced, firsthand, that their weak defense resulted in the interruption of economic prosperity. Next, the subsequent economic exploitation of the country under an aggressor caused mass hardship among the population. Afterward, the Dutch emphasis on economic and financial recovery and the relatively stable economic development in subsequent years created good starting points for building strong, modern armed forces and for sharing the defense burden in accordance with the demands of the alliance. Finally, the Dutch levels of European integration and Atlantic cooperation created a great deal of interdependence in defense end economic policies among the allies.

## 2. Dutch Opportunities

The Dutch security and defense policy along with its strategic political culture accelerated the effort among domestic political powers to encourage the country to become a valuable member of the Alliance. The model that the security and defense policy of the Netherlands provides can serve as a pattern of reasonable behavior within the Alliance for a small state.

### *a. Security and Defense Policy*

The main elements of the Dutch security and defense policy were defined in the very beginning of Dutch membership in NATO:

- The preeminence of NATO interests over other policy goals.
- The acceptance of U.S. leadership of the Alliance.
- The need for West German participation within NATO.
- An emphasis on strategic deterrence.<sup>117</sup>

Most of these basic principles are still kept by the Dutch policy makers, though some of them have changed with time and some new ones were identified throughout the almost fifty-year Dutch membership in NATO.

The first was tight adherence to NATO's plans and NATO's policy. The Netherlands did not develop any of its own security and defense alternatives, and subordinated its policy altogether to NATO's one policy. The defense plans were derived from NATO's planning as the easiest way to meet NATO's defense capability objectives.

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<sup>117</sup> Bitzinger, p. 196.



Second was the strengthening of their own national capability to meet the provisions of Article 5 in practice.<sup>118</sup> The Netherlands consistently allocated defense expenditures to realize all modernizing programs. Reductions, resulting from the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) and other treaties, carried out by the Netherlands are coordinated with other allies so as not to throw NATO defense capabilities out of balance.

Third is the supporting concept of nuclear deterrence through gradual reductions. Although the Dutch armed forces share the nuclear tasks of the alliance unconditionally, the country supports each further reduction in the European nuclear theater.

Fourth is maintaining a Euro-Atlantic scope of European security and the caution to build up exclusively European defense capabilities. The Netherlands does not aspire to continental leadership; therefore, it dislikes the French and German efforts to dominate Europe. The Netherlands supports Euro-Atlantic cooperation as the foundation of European security architecture. It also considers the US conventional military and nuclear presence in Europe to be the lynchpin of Euro-Atlantic defense cooperation.

Fifth is the acceptance of the dominant power within NATO's structural and political framework. The Netherlands, as a small state, respects US dominance and enjoys its leadership within NATO's agenda.

Sixth is the acceptance of burden- and risk sharing. The Dutch government not only positively responds to the alliance's requests for defense spending, but also

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<sup>118</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty, Washington D.C., April 4, 1949.

provides material and personnel for NATO commitments in “out-of-area” issues in to keep order, force peace, and promote international security.

Seventh is increasing cooperation and integration with partners and neighbors. The Netherlands collaborates not only in all major armed projects but also integrates its armed forces within Benelux and with Germany. The further development of close cooperation in political, economical, social and cultural areas is considered an essential part of regional stability.

Eighth are certain limits of domestic policy. A deep examination of all main aspects of the Dutch membership in NATO uncovers certain constraints on domestic political powers. Support for nuclear deterrence has its limits. These limits are drawn by the level of nuclear arsenal on national soil and the public acceptance of that level.

Last is the allocation of national wealth, a public issue. The people are not willing to abandon expensive welfare and health programs, and current decision-making is often narrowed to making a choice between defense and social options.

#### ***b. Strategic Political Culture***

The strategic political culture of the Dutch has been configured almost perfectly to allow the Netherlands to maintain a steady course in its effort to build an advantageous position within NATO. By analyzing strategic political culture in all its detail, three main points can be highlighted.

First, the Dutch political scene enjoys broad consensus of major political powers. The existence of this strong consensus, evident from the beginning of Dutch

membership in NATO, still shows no sign of abating under the changing security circumstances in Europe.

Second, the Dutch people have consistently supported political elites in their approach to security and defense issues and to NATO policy. Such support has been evident in two major directions. On one hand, it has directly influenced the meaning of policy makers of NATO community; on the other hand, it has influenced domestic public poles.

Thus, finally, the Netherlands has enjoyed an extremely high level of support from its citizens for its security and defense policy. A great number of Dutch citizens have expressed support for the Dutch commitment to NATO and to US participation in European defense. However, Dutch decision makers do not have unrestricted support in nuclear issues. The Dutch people do not support any further escalations of nuclear weapons in Europe as a strategy of deterrence.

This analysis of the lessons the Dutch have learned from its history, their geo-strategic situation, and economic factors should help one to understand the main factors which were taken in consideration by Dutch post World War II decision makers, ending in the the reorientation of their foreign policy from neutrality to alignment. Moreover, the analysis of position-building modulators helps one to identify and understand the main elements of the Dutch security and defense policy and strategic political culture that built so strong a position of the Netherlands in NATO.

A summary of these two analyses will be useful in comparing and contrasting them with the case of the Czech Republic. The chief aim of such a comparison would be to help

define this new member's expected position within NATO, and to help uncover any weaknesses which the Czech Republic may find useful in avoiding in order to achieve a roughly equivalent position to the Dutch in NATO.





### **III. CASE STUDY: THE CZECH REPUBLIC**

This part of the thesis analyzes the events of national history, the aspects of country's geo-strategic situation, and the domestic economic factors that led to the strategic decision to resolve its security concerns within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

#### **A. DETERMINANTS OF STRATEGIC DECISION MAKING**

##### **1. Lessons from History**

As Kotvun and Masaryk have noted, "[t]he history of the Czech nation is a meaningful part of world history. The Czechs deserved recognition as the carriers of universal values in view of their struggle for spiritual freedom."<sup>119</sup> However, because of its history, the Czechs have never had a dependable security system in modern history that would secure them from the expansion of a Great military power or that would allow them to enjoy spiritual freedom. The Czech nation has had bitter experiences both from a weak system of collective security, and from the system of collective defense under the unlimited imperial rule of the leading power of the alliance it joined with the Soviet Union in 1955.

Four historical lessons can be drawn from this experience. Firstly, the Czech Republic, considering its size and geographical location, cannot rely on a system of

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<sup>119</sup> George J. Kotvun, "T. G. Masaryk: The Problem of a Small Nation" in Czechoslovakia 1918-88, ed. H. Gordon Skilling (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), p. 30.

collective security. Secondly, the abandonment of national sovereignty on behalf of a great power's demands without a single gunshot does not save a small state fully from consequences of the war, such as the exploitation of its economy, the devastation of its cultural heritage, and casualties in its population. Thirdly, making military pacts with authoritarian regimes can lead to an invasion by former allies. Finally, the end of the Cold War itself has not solved the Czech nation's security concerns.

Since, democracies generally do not fight each other, uncertainties, risks, and newly emerging threats in post Cold War Europe should be responsibly eliminated within a system of collective defense among democracies. The acknowledgment of these facts, based on a deliberate examination of the more than seventy-year history of an independent Czechoslovak state, was a key element in the formation of the new Czech security and defense policy in the post-communist era. The events of the 1938 Munich agreement played one of the most decisive roles in this history.

#### *a. Ineffective Collective Security (1919 - 1938)*

The circumstances surrounding the Munich conference of four powers, which had a critical influence on the survivability of the Czech nation, are deeply rooted in the Czech people's hearts and comprise an essential part of the country's collective memory.<sup>120</sup> The most frequently used expressions among the Czech's describing the

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<sup>120</sup> Knudsen, p. 12. "For the development of stable relations between states, trust is essential. Historical experience is the strongest conditioner for the development of trust. The leaders of a democratic small state cannot deviate too much from the dictates of the collective historical memory if they are to remain on good terms with their own people. Even more, they cannot escape the influence from their own share of that collective memory."

perfidious behavior of France and Britain in this historical context, are *betray*, *dictate*, and simply, *Munich*. The events in Munich persuaded the Czechs that foreign policy anchored to a system of collective security is not strong enough to save a nation from major European conflicts, and they became determined to join not only the Warsaw Treaty Organization after World War II, but also NATO during the post-communist era.

An independent Czechoslovak state was founded on ruins of the Austro-Hungarian empire on October 28, 1918 after the end of the World War I. According to the Treaty of Versailles, the Czechoslovak Republic was established as a multinational federation of three lands: Bohemia and Moravia, Slovakia, and Subcarpathian-Ruthenia (annexed by the Soviet Union and incorporated into the Ukraine in October 1944).

According to Kotvun, “ the Czechoslovak Republic, imperfect as it was, was a decent, nonviolent, progressive state.”<sup>121</sup> The First Republic was a unitary state built upon a liberal, Western-style constitution, and the principles of a pluralistic democracy.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> George J. Kotvun, p. 37.

<sup>122</sup> David W. Paul, p. 21. “The system embodied many liberal principles such as separation of church and state, guarantees of individual rights, and due process of law. A bicameral parliament was elected by universal suffrage; the parliament in turn elected the president, who appointed the prime minister and cabinet. Members of parliament were chosen by a complicated method of proportional representation that guaranteed seats to all parties with a substantial electoral constituency.”

Hans Brisch and Ivan Volgyes, Czechoslovakia: The Heritage of Age Past, (New York: East European Quarterly, 1979), p. 98. The Constitution of 1920 “defined Czechoslovakia as a democratic state, modeled on western countries, especially France, but often went beyond these models to respond to the contemporary requirements of democratic societies, certain particular needs of the Czechoslovak people and state, and various commitments undertaken in the peace treaties. Thus it guaranteed Czechoslovak citizens the customary rights and freedoms of western democracies, but added some new ones, e.g. the right to work and social insurance, as well as women’s suffrage, and protection of marriage, motherhood and family.”

According to David W. Paul, “For twenty years Czechoslovakia had remained a viable and true democracy, despite being surrounded by increasingly undemocratic and hostile states. Moreover, its economy, despite weak spots, was one of the strongest and most advanced in Europe.”<sup>123</sup>

The post World War I foreign policy makers shared president Wilson’s enthusiasm for the League of Nations and collective security overall.<sup>124</sup> Edvard Benes, first foreign minister, created a network of treaties to ensure the rise of democracy. Treaties with Yugoslavia and Romania (1920-21) formed the so-called Little Entente among these

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<sup>123</sup> David W. Paul, Czechoslovakia: Profile of a Socialist republic at the Crossroads of Europe, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1981), p. 25 and pp. 102-103. “... Czechoslovakia was one of the most highly industrialized and economically advanced states in Europe - the fifth greatest industrial power on the continent, by some estimates. The proportion of the population engaged in industry, commerce, banking, and transportation - the more ‘modern’ sectors of the economy - was greater in Czechoslovakia than in France. Per capita income was comparatively high. Export goods were known to be of dependable quality, and from railroads cars to the renowned Bat’a shoes, Czechoslovak products competed well in the European markets.”

<sup>124</sup> President Woodrow Wilson influenced not only the foreign policy of Czechoslovakia, but he had a lion's share in establishing the independent state itself. On June 29th, the Wilson Administration recognized the right of all Slav peoples to freedom and independence. On September 3rd, 1918 President Wilson granted full recognition to the provisional government of the emerging independent state. On October 18th, the President sent a diplomatic note to the Emperor King Carl of Habsburg, rejecting the separate peace games. On the same day, Professor Masaryk, a head of the Czechoslovak movement for independence abroad, and later on the first President of Czechoslovak Republic, proclaimed Czechoslovak independence in Washington. On October 28th, Emperor Carl capitulated to President Wilson’s Fourteen Points in which he called for freedom and independence of Slavic nations. [See John O. Crane and Sylvia Crane, Czechoslovakia: Anvil of the Cold War, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1991), pp. 55-60]. In honor of President Woodrow Wilson, the Main Railway station in Prague bears his name.



three states, all of which were threatened by Hungarian claims on their territories.<sup>125</sup> In 1924 Czechoslovakia signed a mutual defense treaty with France against unprovoked aggression, obviously meant as protection against a resurgent Germany.<sup>126</sup> And, in 1935, a treaty was signed with the Soviet Union, providing for Soviet assistance in the defense of Czechoslovakia, but contingent upon France's honoring its commitment to come to Czechoslovakia's aid.<sup>127</sup> France also assisted in the training of Czechoslovak military and the government personnel, according to the *Maginot* Line pattern, a profound chain of fortifications around boundaries equipped by modern arms from the Skoda factory. The expenditure on defense was higher still: normally between fifteen and twenty percent of GDP. In the year 1938, planned expenditures rose to 44 percent.<sup>128</sup>

After the *Anschluss* of Austria in March 1938, Czechoslovakia became the next target of Hitler's aggressive designs. As Konrad Henlein, Nazi Party member and Party chief of the Sudetenland, asked Hitler, Germany stepped up demand for the

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<sup>125</sup> Hans Brisch and Ivan Volgyes, Czechoslovakia: The Heritage of Age Past, (New York: East European Quarterly, 1979), pp. 106-107.

<sup>126</sup> Igor Lukes, Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler: The Diplomacy of Edvard Benes in the 1930's, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 34.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>128</sup> David Vital, The Survival of Small States: Studies in Small Power/Great Power Conflict, (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 15. Figures showing defense expenditures:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total national budget</i> (Czechoslovak crowns in millions)	<i>Allocation for defense</i> (Czechoslovak crowns in millions)
1934	8,880	1,327
1935	10,098	1,476
1936	12,433	2,276
1937	8,454	1,360
1938	10,117	2,098
1938 (extraordinary budget)		2,360

D. Vital derived these figures chiefly from *Statistical Handbook of the Czechoslovak Republic*, 1943.



integration of the Sudetenland (the Czechoslovakian territory around the boundaries with Germany and populated by a German majority for 700 years) into the German Reich. As a result, after a great deal of diplomatic negotiations with London, Paris, Berlin and Moscow, the Czechoslovak President partially and later fully called on the reluctant Allies to mobilize and fulfill their military obligations. However, Germany found this act provocative. France and Britain were seeking to avoid war at any price.<sup>129</sup> At the Four Power conference in Munich on 29 September 1938, Chamberlain, Daladier, Mussolini, and Hitler after coming to an agreement, read a *communiqué* to the Czechoslovak officials, who had not been admitted into the conference chamber, that the western Allies would not support them if they resisted German annexation of the Sudetenland.<sup>130</sup> In an annex to the treaty, the British and French governments, in accord with the Anglo-French proposals of September 19th, provided an “international guarantee of the new boundaries of the Czechoslovak state against unprovoked aggression.”<sup>131</sup> The president, in spite of an eager military,<sup>132</sup> decided not to fight, but to accept conditions of the dictate.<sup>133</sup> Thus, the

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<sup>129</sup> Josef Korbel, Twentieth-Century Czechoslovakia, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), p. 130.

<sup>130</sup> Paul, p. 27.

<sup>131</sup> John O. Crane and Sylvia Crane, Czechoslovakia: Anvil of the Cold War, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1991), p. 166.

<sup>132</sup> Edvard Beneš, Mnichovské dny, (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 115- 117. General Chief of Staff, General Krejčí, the Inspector-General of the Forces, and the Prime Minister, General Syrový, persuaded President Beneš to defend the country’s integrity without allies: “We must go to war,” they said, “regardless of consequences. The Western powers will be forced to follow us. The population of the Republic is united, (sic) the army is resolute, anxious to fight. And even if we were left alone we must not yield; the army has the duty to defend the national territory, wants to go and will go to war.” Quoted in David Vital,

large and well-equipped Czechoslovakian military was disarmed at the order of political authorities.<sup>134</sup> The disarmed units left the modern system of fortifications and marched inland.<sup>135</sup>

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The Survival of Small States: Studies in Small Power/Great Power Conflict, (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 48.

<sup>133</sup> John O. Crane and Sylvia Crane, p. 159. Munich dictate was arranged in accordance with so called Godesberg Memorandum:

- “1. Withdrawal of the whole Czech armed forces, the police, the gendarmerie, the customs officials, and the frontier guards from the areas to be evacuated.
2. The evacuated territory is to be handed over in its present condition.
3. The Czech Government discharges at once all Sudeten Germans serving in the armed forces or the police anywhere in the Czech state territory ...to return home.
4. The Czech Government liberates all political prisoners of German race.
5. The German Government agrees to permit a plebiscite to take place in those areas [to be] more definitely defined, before at latest, the 24th November ...The plebiscite ... [to be] carried out under ... an international commission.”

“An appendix emphasized a prohibition against destroying or rendering unusable ... military, commercial or traffic establishments...air services and all wireless stations...rolling stock of the railway system.... undamaged...utility services (gas works, power stations, etc.)... Finally, no foodstuff, goods, cattle, raw materials are to be removed.”

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., p. 157. “Czechoslovakia had a standing army of 200,000 men with a million in reserves, including 200,000 experienced Legionnaires, who had undergone a month’s training annually. The population was intensely patriotic, yielding high morale. The armed forces had mechanized heavy artillery and a plethora of guns. Czechoslovakia had for years been a major exporter of arms fabricated in the Skoda and Brno iron, steel, and munitions works.”

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p. 167. “As for direct military supplies, Germany obtained more than 1,500 modern aircraft left intact on the airfields, along with vast supplies of guns and munitions. Regarding the fortifications, after the war Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel and Marshal Fritz von Mannstein candidly admitted at the Nuremberg military trials that they did not believe Germany then had the power to break through the barrier. As Hitler had whispered to Il Duce at the conclusion of the Munich conference, the settlement would immediately release 30 divisions for deployment elsewhere.”

A central fact in this crisis was that Czechoslovakia, a small power, had seized the European initiative without consultation with Allies.<sup>136</sup> It is an irony of history that France and Britain, after using force without previous consultation in NATO to regain control of the Suez Canal in 1956, were humiliated by the USA, a greater power in the Alliance. Their action merited them the label of “unworthy and unreliable” allies and it marked a “betrayal of the community leading to violation of consultation norms and the temporary breakdown of the collective identity.”<sup>137</sup> Unlike Czechoslovakia after Munich, however, they suffered only from moral and economic losses.

Thus, the Munich case became a classical paradigm of what can happen to a small state within a weak system of collective security.<sup>138</sup> This national collective memory had a great influence on the post-communist Czechoslovak (and later Czech leaders) in their pursuit of a vigorous system of collective defense by anchoring the state within NATO.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Henderson B. Braddick, Germany, Czechoslovakia, and the ‘Grand Alliance’ in the May Crisis, 1938, (Denver Colorado: University of Denver, 1969), p. 19.

<sup>137</sup> Thomas Risse-Kappen, pp. 83-84.

<sup>138</sup> David Vital, The Survival of Small States: Studies in Small Power/Great Power Conflict, (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 19. “If the policy of the small nation is specifically one of identification with a larger one for furtherance of its own interests, it may therefore be expected that sooner or later, as the mutual interests erode and as the views diverge, one of two results will follow. The small state will enter into conflict with the larger one; or else it will subside into vassalage, in other words, be forced to subordinate its own interests to those of the master-state.”

<sup>139</sup> Knudsen, p. 12. “The collective historical experience of a nation tends to become embedded in people's minds and creates strong preconceptions that serve as constraints for joint political action.”

However, the Munich dictate was not the final betrayal of France and Britain to the Czechoslovak people. According to Brisch and Volgyes, “In less than six months, they were betrayed for the second time by their one-time western friends.”<sup>140</sup> When Hitler occupied Bohemia - Moravia, six month later, in March 1939, France and Britain did not assist in the defense of the country's new boundaries.

*b. Consequences of World War II*

Six months before the outburst of World War II on March 15, 1939, the Nazi *Wehrmacht* marched into Czechoslovakia, meeting no resistance. On March 16, Hitler arrived in Prague and proclaimed Bohemia and Moravia a German protectorate. The hardship of the Czech people under German rule, as a direct consequence of a weak foreign policy of collective security, was the second main point historical lesson that led to the decision to join the North Atlantic Alliance.

Firstly, the Czechoslovak Republic ceased to exist as a sovereign independent state. Early after the Sudetenland's integration in the German Reich, Poland and Hungary also occupied part of the Czechoslovakian territory.<sup>141</sup> The day before declaration of the *Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren*, both Slovakia and Subcarpathian

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<sup>140</sup> Hans Brisch and Ivan Volgyes, p. 119.

<sup>141</sup> *Czechoslovakia: A Country Study*, p. 44. “After Munich, Bohemia and Moravia lost about 38 percent of their combined area, as well as about 2.8 million Germans and approximately 750,000 Czechs to Germany. Hungary received 11,882 square kilometers in southern Slovakia and southern Ruthenia; only 53 percent of the population in this territory was Hungarian. Poland acquired Tesen and two minor border areas in northern Slovakia.”



Ruthenia proclaimed their independence, and became fascist vassal states.<sup>142</sup> Despite the fact that the Czech government had not been dissolved, Hitler named a *Reichsprotektor* Konstantin von Neurath, German advisers were appointed to government departments, the Gestapo assumed policy authority, and several local German administrative offices were established to take control of the territory.<sup>143</sup>

Secondly, economic losses were enormous.<sup>144</sup> Immediately after the war, Czechoslovakia lost important industrial capacity and deposits of raw materials.<sup>145</sup> Within the protectorate, all industries worked for the Reich and all industries not related to war were prohibited. Thousands of Czechs were drafted to work under German supervision and 30,000 laborers were sent to work in Germany.<sup>146</sup> Gold reserves in the amount of 18.4 tons were moved to Germany and to the USA after the end of the war. Before the very end of the war, Western allies heavily bombed Škoda's weapon factories and gasoline terminals in Záluží.

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<sup>142</sup> Paul, p. 28.

<sup>143</sup> Czechoslovakia: A Country Study, p. 47.

<sup>144</sup> Korbel, p. 238. "National losses were equal to the whole of the national income from the years 1932-33 to 1937-38."

<sup>145</sup> Crane, p. 167. By the integration of the Sudetenland to Germany, the Czechoslovak economy lost the following resources: "66% of her coal and 80% of her lignite. Her industrial losses, according to German statistics, amount to 70% of her iron & steel, 80% of her textiles, 75% of her glass, 86% of her chemicals, 90% of her news type, 40% of her timber, and 70% of her electric power supplies."

<sup>146</sup> Czechoslovakia: A Country Study, p. 47.



Thirdly, there were material and moral losses in the armed forces. After frontier fortifications were abandoned by the Czechoslovakian army, the Germans instantly removed the military equipment and stocks to Germany.<sup>147</sup> Moreover, since the armed forces were disbanded, the high level of military prestige in society that was attained during the inter-war period has never been regained.<sup>148</sup>

Fourthly, the Czechoslovakian nation was supposed to be swept off the map of Europe.<sup>149</sup> Nazi terror was aimed specifically against the Czech intelligentsia. Universities, theaters, and the National Opera were closed, numerous organizations were dissolved and political parties forbidden.<sup>150</sup> Prominent democratic journalists, writers,

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<sup>147</sup> Korbel, p. 158. Military equipment transferred to Germany: "1,213 airplanes; 2,253 pieces of light and heavy artillery; 501 aircraft guns and 1,966 antitank guns; 810 tanks; 603,000 rifles, 57,000 machine guns, 114,000 pistols; and over 1 billion rounds of ammunition for the infantry and over 3 million rounds for artillery."

<sup>148</sup> Rakowska-Harmstone, Warsaw Pact: The Question of Cohesion, (Ottawa: ORAE, 1986), pp. 349 and 392.

<sup>149</sup> Korbel, pp. 157-158. "Hitler had given vent to his hatred of the Czechs as early as 1932, when he told Hermann Rauschning that he would '...transfer the Czechs into Siberia or the area of Volhynia and ... assign them to reservations in the new federated states. The Czechs must be removed from Central Europe. As long as they remain there, they will be the focus of Hussite-Bolshevik disruption.' During World War II, Berlin prepared several plans for solving the Czech problem. First, the Nazis planned to exile the entire Czech population in the East. When they came to realize that they were in need of the Czech labor force, however, the Nazis concluded that one part of the Czech people would be transported to the East, another part would be germanized, and the rest would be exterminated. Studies were undertaken to determine (by the measurement of skulls) which Czechs were anthropologically 'suitable' for the process of germanization."

<sup>150</sup> Brisch and Volgyes, p. 126. On November 15, 1939, Hitler "ordered the arrest of more than 1,800 Czech university students and teachers, nine of whom were summarily shot and several hundred deported to a German concentration camp. On the same day Hitler ordered the closing of all Czech universities and colleges, thus initiating the first stage of his long-term plan to deprive the Czechs of their intelligentsia and to facilitate thereby their eventual

teachers, and priests were herded into concentration camps.<sup>151</sup> Before the war ended, 360,000 Czechoslovak citizens had been held in concentration camps and prisons, and 235,000 had died there.<sup>152</sup>

Thus the political, military, economic, social and cultural consequences of the Nazi occupation during World War II formed further tiles in the mosaic of national collective memory, which contributed to the decision to join the Alliance.

*c. Collective Defense of Authoritarian Regimes (1955 - 1990)*

The Czechoslovakian state, enjoying the “security benefits” from membership in the Warsaw Treaty Organization since 1955, experienced yet more bitterness. The lesson was that integration in a collective defense system is not automatically a solution for the concerns of a small power. Security depends on the kind of the coalition and its qualitative parameters. Thus, authoritarian regimes tend to create only authoritarian military-political coalitions, accompanied by a lack of respect for the sovereignty of smaller partners in the coalition. The invasion of Czechoslovakia by Soviet troops in 1968 along with a mere symbolic contingent of other “fraternal” armies is a classic example of such a case.

In accordance with the Yalta negotiations, Czechoslovakia was liberated by the Soviet Army in 1945, and being hence located in the zone of Soviet postwar influence,

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Germanization.”

<sup>151</sup> Korbelt, p. 157.

<sup>152</sup> Korbelt, p. 159.

further political developments took place in this spirit. A common State of Czechs and Slovaks was created again, yet Subcarpathian Ruthenia was integrated into the Ukraine. The Communist Party won the elections in 1946. Heavy industry, mines, and banks were nationalized. The Communist takeover in 1948 involved the taking of power by leftist political powers, followed by the full implementation of a state-planned economy.<sup>153</sup> The economy expanded enormously in the steel industry, machine production, and coal mining.<sup>154</sup> However, years of huge economic progress alternated with years of stagnation.

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<sup>153</sup> Paul, p. 106. "On January 1, 1949, the first five-year plan was launched according to central directives that were now mandatory rather than indicative. Heavy industry was emphasized and ambitious goals were set: a 57 percent average increase in industrial production, 93 percent in metallurgy, and 100 percent in heavy machinery. Two years into the plan, all targets were raised dramatically - heavy industry by 80 percent over the estimates set in 1948. Nearly half a million workers were expected to take jobs in industry. The second and third five-year plans (1956-60 and 1961-65, respectively) were similarly aimed at building heavy industry further, ... Nor was Slovakia left entirely out of the picture. Between 1948 and 1959, industrial production in Slovakia rose by 347 percent (compared to 233 percent in the country as a whole)."

<sup>154</sup> David W. Paul, p. 107.

Growth of Industrial Production, 1948-1960  
(Index: 1948 = 100)

	1948	1953 <sup>a</sup>	1955 <sup>b</sup>	1960 <sup>c</sup>
Industry, Total	100	193	224	373
Capital Goods	100	219	249	434
Consumer Goods	100	168	197	307
Electricity	100	165	200	325
Hard Coal	100	145	171	246
Lignite	100	146	202	290
Iron Ore	100	158	174	218
Pig Iron	100	169	181	285
Crude Steel	100	167	171	258
Rolled Steel	100	154	168	252
Cement	100	140	174	305

Source: Author's calculations from raw data in *Statistická Rocenka*, 1957, 1961. <sup>a</sup>Final year of first five-year plan. <sup>b</sup>Second year of interim plan (1954-55). <sup>c</sup>Final year of second five-year plan.

Reform forces inside the Communist Party criticized the economic model, and the New Economic Model that limited central planning was approved in 1965.

The overall democratization of society softened censors' control in the media and public debate, not only over the economic model, but also over the bureaucratic political system. This reform movement, under the control of Party reformers, began in the beginning of 1968. In April of 1968, Alexander Dubček, a leader of the reform wing of the Communist Party, passed the Action Program in the party's presidium. Through this program, he proposed a new model of democratic socialism and nationalism, socialism with a human face. Anti-Soviet articles and comments in the media stimulated anti-Soviet moods in society. In response to Dubček's initiative, the staff of the Klement Gottwald Military-Political Academy in Prague drafted two documents in May 1968: "Notes on the Action Program of the Czechoslovak People's Army," and "How Czechoslovak State Interests in the Military Sphere are to be Formulated." The latter, known as the "Gottwald Memorandum"<sup>155</sup> and distributed to all major political officials, involved strategic defense options other than those found through NATO membership. This reform movement in society was quickly interrupted by the invasion of NATO armies.

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<sup>155</sup> Rakowska-Harmstone, p. 367. "The Gottwald Memorandum identified three possible defense strategies for Czechoslovakia: 1) the coalition principle (the alliance with the Soviet Union and the other states of the Warsaw Pact), on which our defense system is currently based, is subject to development and it is necessary to reconsider its validity in the coming 10 to 15 years; 2) the possible coordination of defense in Central Europe without the military potential of the USSR (some kind of military analog to the political Little Entente 'in socialist form,' or some kind of collective security organization without a class determination); 3) the possibility of neutralizing one's territory or pursuing a policy of neutrality and relying on one's own means of defense."



On, August 20, 1968, Warsaw Pact forces - including troops from Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Hungary, Poland and the Soviet Union - invaded Czechoslovakia. Approximately 500,000 troops, mostly from the Soviet Union, participated in the operation. The invasion was meticulously planned and coordinated, as the operation leading to the capture of Prague's Ruzyne International Airport in the early hours of the invasion demonstrated. A special flight from Moscow, which had prior clearance, arrived just as the Warsaw Pact troops began crossing the borders. The aircraft carried more than 100 plainclothes agents, who quickly secured the airport and prepared the way for a huge airlift. Giant An-12 aircraft began arriving at the rate of one per minute, unloading Soviet airborne troops equipped with artillery and light tanks. As the operations at the airport continued, columns of tanks and motorized rifle troops headed toward Prague and other major centers, meeting no armed resistance. Czechoslovak authorities, as in the Munich crisis of 1938 and the Communist takeover of 1948, had confined the armed forces to their barracks. By dawn on August 21, 1968, Czechoslovakia was an occupied country, and Alexander Dubček was kidnapped to Moscow. Soviet troops remained stationed in Czechoslovakia and a program of "normalization"- the restoration of continuity with the pre-reform period - was initiated. The democratization of Czechoslovakia was delayed for more than twenty years.



*d. Post - Cold War Disorder*

The fall of the Berlin wall in 1989-1990 brought with it a wave of democratic revolutions which smashed the old communist regimes in the states of Central and Eastern Europe. The end of the Cold War also precipitated the end of the postwar Yalta system in Europe. Uncertainties and newly emerging risks on the European continent redirected the security and defense policies of post-communist governments toward NATO. The first feeling of uncertainty was brought on by the process of German reunification—shortly after the opening of the German border in 1990. Not only Germany's small neighbors, but also its traditional competitors, France and Britain, were afraid of the creation of a colossus which would militarily dominate Europe. Moreover, Western European allies were afraid of resuscitating the old paradigm in German-Russia relations: “Competition for influence in Central Europe, perhaps accompanied by sharing of roles.”<sup>156</sup> When the governments of East and West Germany, France, Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union (“two plus four”) negotiated conditions of German unification, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl negotiated directly with Mikhail Gorbachev in the agreement of July 16, 1990 on German membership in NATO, making the ‘two plus four’ negotiations seem like a *pro forma* framework of secondary importance.”<sup>157</sup> The questions that accompanied the process of Germany gaining full sovereignty in 1990 were whether Germany would remain neutral or establish a special relationship with Russia, whether there would be further presence of US troops on German soil, and whether Germany

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<sup>156</sup> David S. Yost, “France in the New Europe,” *Foreign Affairs*, vol.69, p. 115.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

would accept the presence of any nuclear weapons at all. It is highly understandable that these doubts were shared between not only France and Britain, but also among the smaller neighbors of the prospectively unified Germany, like Czechoslovakia.

Second, uncertainty in the security of post Cold War Europe has been produced by the situation in Soviet Union and later on in Russia. Despite the fact that there was no longer any direct Soviet threat, unstable and unpredictable political developments in the former superpower have been interpreted as potential threats to its currently democratic former satellites. The Soviet Union faced two attempts at a *putsch* in the early 1990's, and the course that political reforms in Russia have taken has not guaranteed that the military will remain in its barracks. As Lilia Shevtsova notes, "The absence of strong political institutions and of mechanisms for civilian control of the military increases the likelihood that the armed forces will at some point interfere directly in the nations's political life, perhaps through a military *coup*."<sup>158</sup>

Thirdly, the rebuilding of the European security architecture has generated other risks to new democracies. The Warsaw Pact was formally dissolved on July 1, 1991, and the former Soviet satellites in Central and Eastern Europe found themselves in a security power vacuum. Initial enthusiasm among the small states for the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) evaporated because the organization lacked teeth. Since 1991 Czechoslovakia has participated in the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) (replaced by Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997), an advisory

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<sup>158</sup> Lilia Shevtsova, "Russia's Fragmented Armed Forces" in Civil-military Relations and Democracy," ed. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 117.

organ involving former WTO states. However, NACC neither makes obligations nor offers guarantees with respect to military defense.

Finally, the disintegration of the artificially formed, multinational state-formations in Europe and the subsequently emerging ethnic conflicts have been a further source of uncertainty and risk. The Soviet Union ceased to exist in December 1991. After the Baltic states declared their independence, so did the Ukraine and an array of other former Soviet Republics. The disintegration of the former Soviet Union itself was accompanied by the outburst of ethnic wars in Georgia and Azerbaijan. In 1991 the Serbian-Bosnian crisis started, which resulted in a three-year civil war and the collapse of the Yugoslavian Federation. The state of Czechoslovakia, also, began to splinter, and on January 1, 1993, two independent states arose: the Czech Republic and Slovakia - with what proved to be different paths to Euro-Atlantic integration.

Thus, the process of German reunification, the unpredictable development of political reforms in the Soviet Union and Russia, the security vacuum after the erosion of the Yalta system, and the emergence of ethnic conflicts in Europe were the contemporary uncertainties, risks and threats which form part of the collective memory influencing strategic decisions in the Czech Republic. The historical points that led Czech decision-makers in the early 1990's to make strategic decisions toward NATO alignment were: a) the failure of the collective security system in 1938; b) the consequences of World War II; c) ills and shortcomings of the Soviet-led collective defense as highlighted in 1968; and d) the major uncertainties, risks, and threats in post Cold War era. It must be mentioned that most of these more or less bitter historical experiences resulted from both

the overall geo-strategic situation of Czechoslovakia (the Czech Republic later on) and the country's status as a successor of the former federative states.

## **2. Geo - strategic Situation**

Professor T.G. Masaryk pointed out in 1900 the importance of geo-strategic factors in Czech state security: "The number of our population, our landlocked position...force us to enter an association with other peoples and countries."<sup>159</sup> Some of these factors have not changed with time and others have.. Those which significantly relate to current decision-making are the size of the population and the country, its location, and its deposits of strategic natural resources.

Situated at the geographical heart of Europe, the Czech Republic consists of about 60 percent of the area of the former Czechoslovak federation. Its size (30,450 sq. mi./78,864 sq. km.) is a little less than the size of the state of Maine. It is a landlocked country, bounded by Slovakia on the East, Austria on the South, Germany on the West, and Poland on the North. The political borders coincide for the most part with the natural frontiers formed by the mountains of the Massif, which rings the country. The interior terrain is a mixture of highlands and plains intertwined with rivers and streams. Including the old Czech "crown lands" of Bohemia and Moravia (plus part of Silesia), the country

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<sup>159</sup> Kotvun, p. 30.



has a population of 10,432,774 (July 1995 est.),<sup>160</sup> of which 94 percent is Czech, 3 percent Slovak, and the rest, other small ethnic minorities.<sup>161</sup>

The tiny population is the first constraint being taken into consideration in the evaluation of the Czech Republic's geo-strategic situation. Limited human resources do not provide enough manpower both for building a sufficient standing army, nor for the mobilization of a "second echelon." In addition, this small population cannot produce sufficient GNP to develop a significant defense infrastructure.

The second limit is the size of the country. From a military point of view, the small territory does not allow enough space for operational maneuvers of any military significance. Moreover, industrial and political targets in the Czech Republic can be reached within several minutes in the case of an air attack, to several hours in the case of a land campaign. Since the mountains on the borders of the Czech state do little to protect the country in this industrial war age, this characteristic of the country's terrain no longer plays any significant role in Czech defense.

The third limiting factor of the Czech Republic's geo-strategic situation is its deposits of strategic raw materials. The Czech Republic has strategic deposits of uranium, which increase the country's vulnerability to a great extent in the nuclear age. Annual production in the mid-1980's was estimated by western analysts to be from 2,000 to 3,000

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<sup>160</sup> "Czech Republic" in The World Factbook 1995, (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1995), p.112.

<sup>161</sup> "Czech Republic," Political Handbook of the World: 1997 (1997), p. 215.



tons. During the Cold War almost all production was exported to the Soviet union, which was lacking in this “gun-powder” of the nuclear war.

The geographic location of the Czech Republic in Central Europe is the last important factor. Deeply tied culturally to the West<sup>162</sup> and consanguineously as Slavs to the East,<sup>163</sup> the Czech nation tends to switch its foreign policy relatively easily in the process of balancing-Eastern and Western power interests. For example, the foreign policy of the First Republic (1918-1938) was oriented in favor of Paris and London. The communist regime (1948-1990), on the other hand, subordinated its foreign policy to the Soviet agenda. Finally, the post-communist government switched its policy of integration back to Western European political, economic and security structures.

The tendency for this country to play such a balancing act also extends to the hands of other nations. Merely the country's location in the center of Europe on the boundaries of empires to the North and South and to the East and West caused it to be subject to reparations or power balancing by other powers. For example, Austria and Prussia, the powers in the South and North, exchanged parts of Czech territory after the Silesian wars (1740-1748).<sup>164</sup> In the West, Hitler occupied the Sudetenland in 1938, and Bohemia and Moravia in 1939, and, in the East, Stalin took Carpathian Ruthenia in 1944.

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<sup>162</sup> Brisch and Volgyes, p. 31.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>164</sup> Jaroslav Krejčíř and Stanislav Soják, Czech History, (Dubicko, Czech Republic: INFOA, 1993), p. 63.

Even further back in history, the location of the country at the crossroads of Europe caused the Czech territory to be plundered from all directions by raids from foreign troops. Romans came from the South in the 1st century, then Hungarian tribes from Asia in the 9th century, Swedes from the North in the Thirty Years' War, and Germans<sup>165</sup> from the West during a more gradual migration which has lasted more permanently.

The best symbolic expression of the geo-strategic importance of the Czech territory was the Battle of Three Emperors in Austerlitz (1805). Three emperors, the French Emperor, the Austrian Emperor and the Russian Czar, met on the territory of the Czech Kingdom on Napoleons' road to the East.

Thus, the current geo-strategic situation of the Czech Republic has been determined by the small population and size of the country, its possession of strategic natural deposits, and its geographic location in Central Europe. These factors must be considered in strategic decision-making.

### **3. Economic Factors**

There are three lessons to be drawn from an examination of the history of economic development that should be considered when making strategic security and defense decisions: 1) crucial discrepancies cannot be allowed to exist between the

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<sup>165</sup> Knudsen, p. 12. The historical record of Czech-German relations fully supports following theoretical concept: "Here the reference is to the history of relations between the small state and the nearest great power...The history of relations between great powers and their smaller neighbors has a tendency to be marked by dominance and violence. It is not likely to inspire trust between them. Thus history may work against attempts to stabilize a relationship of power disparity."

economic policy and the security system; 2) the costs of the previous security policy have to be taken into consideration; and 3) coordination must be achieved between economic recovery policies and security systems

*a. Economic Policy vs. Security System*

An analysis of several economic aspects of the periods preceding the political crises of 1938 and 1968, with respect to the nature of the security systems at the time, highlights discrepancies between the economic policies and the security systems of the periods. These discrepancies, in turn, contributed to crisis.

*(1) The First Republic.*

The Czechoslovak democracy in the First Republic (1918-1938) enjoyed a high level of economic prosperity.<sup>166</sup> However a weak system of collective security failed to safeguard that economic prosperity. The main cause of this failure was that in 1938 a large amount of industry was located in a territory with a heavy German population. The ability to exploit such a key Czechoslovakian economic resource was due in part to the heritage of the Habsburg monarchy's industrial base,<sup>167</sup> and in part to

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<sup>166</sup> Radoslav Selucky, "From Capitalism to Socialism" in Czechoslovakia, 1918-88, ed, H. Gordon Skilling (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), p. 160. "Czechoslovakia was already among the six largest exporters of weapons in the world long before the Second World War."

<sup>167</sup> Zora P. Pryor, "Czechoslovak Economic Development in the Inter-war Period," in A History of the Czechoslovak Republic 1918-1948 ed. Victor S. Mamatey and Radomir Luza (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 190. "It has been estimated that 43 percent of the total industrial labor force in pre-1914 Austria and Hungary was employed in Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia."

Czechoslovakian economic policy after the World War I. The Government of the new independent state, however, continued in the development of heavy industry in those regions only; consequently, after the Sudetenland was cut off, Czechoslovakia became an agrarian state. As a result, the established system of collective security, aimed against Germany, was in disharmony with economic reality. Thus, economic potential of a high order “failed to serve a concrete political purpose, and played no role in the defense of the state when the test came in September 1938.”<sup>168</sup>

(2) 1960's.

The events in Prague during the Spring of 1968 showed that making corrections in order to align an economic policy with a security system is precluded within an authoritarian system of collective defense. In the early 1960's, when the soviet model of the state-planned economy was exhausted intellectually and incapable of further conceptual progress, the Czech Economist Ota Šik introduced the “New Economic Model”<sup>169</sup> in 1965. The need for economic reform, in turn, stimulated political reform as

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<sup>168</sup> Vital, p. 15.

<sup>169</sup> David W. Paul, Czechoslovakia: Profile of a Socialist republic at the Crossroads of Europe, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1981), pp. 111-112. “Briefly put, the NEM, called for greatly limiting the role of the central planning authorities. They would no longer plan every detail of production, allocation, and distribution; rather their task would be to set basic targets. Most of the details of how the targets would be met were to be worked out by middle- and lower-level planners, with the most important responsibility devolving to enterprise managers. Industries would be managed on the basis of profitability, and plant managers would have the authority to determine how the earnings of their plants were to be used for investment, modernization, expansion, or wage bonuses. Wages and income scales were to be “de-leveled”- that is, keyed more to workers’ skills, education, and training - and higher labor productivity was to be stimulated by bonuses and other forms of material



well. A month after the introduction of Dubček's "Action Program" in the Spring of 1968, which included the political reform, the "Gottwald Memorandum" was issued, which attempted to align the Czechoslovakian defense system with an economic policy reoriented toward the West. The attempt to relieve the Czechoslovakian People's Army of the Warsaw Pact command structure, and to set up cooperation with NATO failed. The invasion of five armies from the Warsaw Treaty Organization in August of 1968 ended all reforms and restored a firm client relationship between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union.

*b. Economic Exploitation*

Both the exhaustion of the Czech economy in 1938-45 and the failure to implement vital economic reforms in the 1960's were direct consequences of a weak Czechoslovakian state security system. The subsequent devastation of the national economy after the breakdowns of the 1938 and 1968 systems influenced the decision to integrate the state into democratic systems of collective defense.

*(1) The Second Republic and Protectorate.*

After the Munich dictate was accepted, Czechoslovakia lost most of its industrial capacity, 29 percent of its territory, and 34 percent of its population.

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incentive. The NEM further envisioned a return to certain features of the market: supply and demand factors would play an important function in determining prices, in most cases within government-imposed ceilings. The central planners, for their part, would continue to regulate prices of such basic commodities as raw materials, energy, and imported capital goods."



The state was cut off from crucial sources of national wealth when it experienced these industrial losses (58 percent in mining, and briquette works; 65.3 percent in the glass industry; 59.8 percent in textiles; and 53.5 percent in the paper industry).<sup>170</sup>

Although the war alone inflicted less physical damage on Czechoslovakia than on most other European countries, the economic consequences were considerable: "The protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was turned into an important source of input for the German war machine, emphasizing the production of coal, steel, and armaments."<sup>171</sup> Big industrial concerns and banks were taken over and losses in movable property alone were between \$0.5 and \$1 billion. Some \$100 million were extracted annually from taxes.<sup>172</sup>

## (2) *"Normalization"*.

The period between the Soviet invasion in 1968 and the democratic revolution in November 1989 (also known as the normalization period) was, in economic terms, a return to the previous extensive period of centralized price-fixing. This economic system remained essentially intact until 1989.<sup>173</sup> Reforms introduced during this period did not succeed to develop further the socialist economic model. Problems began to

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<sup>170</sup> Korbel, p. 152.

<sup>171</sup> Paul, p. 103.

<sup>172</sup> Korbel, p. 158.

<sup>173</sup> Jim Prust, et al., The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic: An Economy Transition (Washington, D. C.: International Monetary Fund, 1990), p. 3.

appear in several sectors, and since then, the difficulties have multiplied. Table 1 illustrates this economic decline through selected figures.

	1970-75	1975-80	1980-85	1986	1987	1988	1989
	(Change in percent)						
Industrial production	6.7	4.4	2.6	3.1	2.5	2.1	0.8
Agriculture Production	2.2	1.9	1.8	0.5	1.0	2.9	1.0
Export of goods	5.0	11.8	5.4	-0.2	1.8	3.4	-1.0
Consumer prices	0.2	2.1	2.0	0.5	0.1	0.2	1.4
Nominal wages	3.5	2.7	1.8	1.5	2.0	2.3	2.3

Source: Jim Prust, et al., The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic: An Economy Transition (Washington, D. C.: International Monetary Fund, 1990), p. 51.

Table 1. Percentage Decrease Across Time Within Major Economic, 1970-1989

The World Bank has noted that “[e]ven though the country has been doing well compared to other centrally planned economies in the region, it is important to stress that such a comparison is misleading since Czechoslovakia was one of the most industrialized countries before World War II.”<sup>174</sup> In 1938 Czechoslovakia had per capita income comparable with that of Austria and Finland. As can be seen from data in Table 2, the order changed significantly by 1990.

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<sup>174</sup> Czechoslovakia: Transition to a Market Economy (Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 1991), p. xii.

	Per Capita GNP In 1990 U.S. dollars		Date Manufacturing Employment Exceeded Agricultural Employment
	1938 <sup>a</sup>	1990	
Austria	1,800	19,200	1950
Czechoslovakia	1,800	3,100	1940
Finland	1,800	26,100	1950
Italy	1,300	16,800	1960
Hungary	1,100	2,800	1970
Poland	1,000	1,700	1970
Portugal	800	4,900	1980
Spain	900	10,900	1970
Bulgaria	700	2,200	1970
Greece	800	6,000	1990
Romania	700	1,600	1980
Turkey	600	1,600	1990

Source: G. Pohl and P. Sorsa, *European Integration and Trade with the Developing World*, The World Bank, Washington D.C., 1992 and OECD Historical Statistics and World Bank Development Reports, various annual editions.

<sup>a</sup> The figures for 1938 have been adjusted to 1990 prices with the U.S. GDP deflator. Cited in: East-Central European Economies in Transition: Joint Committee Congress of the United States (Washington, DC: Joint Committee Print, 1994), p. 17.

Table 2. Per Capita Income, 1938 and 1990, and Approximate Date When Employment in Manufacturing Exceeded Agricultural Employment for Selected Countries

The next economic factor playing a role in Czech strategic decision-making was the devastation of the economy under Nazi rule and, later under the rule of communist hard-liners. These situations deprived the Czechoslovakian citizens of the living standards to which they had become accustomed.

c. *Economic Recovery*

The final and, likely, the most important political economic factor leading the Czech post-communist authorities to join NATO was the need to find a way to economic recovery through a new political-economic orientation. The three main economic prospects that prompted the decision to join the Euro-Atlantic security structures were: 1) integration into western-European and World economic institutions; 2) a reorientation of foreign trade to the West; and 3) flows of investment capital from the West.

After 1990, the government introduced economic reforms based on the transformation from a centrally planned, to an open-market economy. The government set up a strategic economic goal to the join European Union (EU).<sup>175</sup> To gain access to financial funds the government of Czechoslovakia applied to rejoin the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in early 1990.<sup>176</sup> The association agreement with the

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<sup>175</sup> James W. Morrison, NATO Expansion and Alternative Future Security Alignments, (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1995), p. 81.

<sup>176</sup> Bijan B. Aghevli, Eduardo Borensztein, and Tessa van der Willigen, Stabilization and Structural Reform in the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic: First Stage (Washington DC: International Monetary Fund, 1992), p. 10. To stabilize the exchange rate of Czech currency in 1990 “access to IMF resources in the amount of up to \$1.8 billion was provided under a stand-by arrangement and the compensatory and contingency financing facility. Of this amount, about \$0.7 billion was disbursed in early January to boost the initial level of reserves to about one and a half months of imports. Support from the IMF provided a respite while other financial support could be arranged. Subsequently in 1991, commitments of about \$1,5 billion were made by the European Community, the other industrial countries of the Group of 24, and the World Bank - of which about half is expected to be disbursed in 1991 and the remainder in 1992.”

Jim Prust, p. 2. “An Original member, Czechoslovakia withdrew from the Fund on December 31, 1954, following the country’s difficulties in providing information and



EU, signed in 1991, has improved market access by reducing barriers to trade. For the same reason, Czechoslovakia revitalized its membership in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), of which it was a founding member in 1947. The Czech Republic has negotiated a trade agreement with the seven countries of the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) and agreed upon a Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) with the Visegrad group, in which all barriers will be dropped by January 1, 1998.<sup>177</sup>

Together with the process of elimination of trade barriers, the Czech Republic reoriented itself from trade with the East to trade with the West. Germany has replaced the USSR as the main Czech trade partner; it received 26.9 percent of Czech exports and provided 25.1 percent of Czech imports in 1993. Slovakia remains the second largest trade partner, but the trend continues to be downward. Austria was the third largest recipient of Czech exports with 9.8 percent, followed by the United Kingdom with 3.2 percent.<sup>178</sup>

A great deal of foreign direct investment also comes from the West. Foreign direct investment in the Czech Republic from 1990 through 1993 totaled over \$3 billion (the Czech territory the recipient of 88 percent of foreign capital at the end of

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consulting with the fund on exchange restrictions. Czechoslovakia withdrew from the World Bank at the same time, remaining a member of the United Nations and the bank for International Settlements.”

<sup>177</sup> East-Central European Economies in Transition: Joint Economic Committee Congress of the United States (Washington, DC: Joint Committee Print, 1994), p. 516.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., p. 515.



1992, with the remaining 22 percent going to Slovakia). The largest source of foreign direct investment has been Germany, with a total of \$641 million between 1990 and 1993 (31.2 percent of total foreign investment). The United States is the second largest source of investment, with \$572 million (27.9 percent), followed by France (12.6 percent), Belgium (7.1 percent), and Austria (6.1 percent).<sup>179</sup>

After the democratic revolution and the collapse of the centrally planned economies of Eastern Europe, Czechoslovakia, like other countries of the former Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), enjoys prevalently Western European assistance in the effort to develop a free market economy.<sup>180</sup>

Integration into the western, and the world's economic institutions, western capital flows, and a reorientation of trade policy to western markets are the main elements of the Czech macroeconomic transformation. Achieving a strategic balance between economic and security goals will increase the overall security of the Czech Republic.

From an economic point of view, there have been three factors which have determined strategic security decision-making in the country since 1990. First is the historical lesson that there must be a highly rational balance struck between economic policy and any external security system. The events of Munich in 1938 and of Prague in the Spring of 1968 showed the Czech people that a weak system of collective security or

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid, p. xi. "Unlike the Marshall Plan era of 50 years ago, the United States is not the principal force in this postwar period. The largest share of aid and commercial transactions is from West Europe, which will also be the region's primary market for the foreseeable future."

defense in coalition with authoritarian regimes leads to economic devastation. Secondly, the high level of economic exploitation under both foreign rule and a client government alarmed the Czech people. Both periods led to the diminishing of living standards to their marginal limit. Finally, the provisions of any external economic relationship that is chosen to help recover the economy and to help achieve permanent prosperity also reorient domestic security and defense policies. The only way to avoid mistakes and to achieve strategic economic goals with certainty is to ensure a high level of external security through the integration into the Euro-Atlantic military-political structures of western democracies.

## **B. POSITION BUILDING MODULATORS**

Czech “security and defense policy” and Czech “strategic political culture” are and will be the two main agents of the Czech Republic’s position in NATO. Security and defense policy has had clear orientation to closer military to NATO standards since early 1991. However, it is evident that a good position in NATO cannot be achieved without crucial changes in strategic political culture, the importance of which has been neglected thus far in the Czech Republic.

## 1. Security and Defense Policy

In this section, the following question will be answered: What kind of security and defense policy does the Czech Republic exercise? Since the positive Dutch attitude to defense cooperation, policy coordination, risk-sharing, and burden-sharing merited the Netherlands the NATO honor of reliable ally, this examination of Czech security and defense policy will be carried out with respect to the same variables.

### *a. Defense Cooperation*

As in the case of the Dutch, cooperation and friendly relations among regional partners and NATO members is generally the core of the Alliance. The relatively high level of the Czech Republic's security and defense cooperation in the region, currently, has been attained through an evolutionary process of finding its own security identity in two interdependent areas: dismantling the old Yalta system in Europe and designing a new European security architecture.

Czechoslovak policy makers attempted coordinated the plans of Poland, Hungary, and East Germany to dismantle both WTO and NATO<sup>181</sup> and transforming them into a collective security system as framed in the Conference on Cooperation and Security in Europe (CSCE). The utopian notion of the Czechs intended, " ... in effect, [to] place the Germans and the Russians, plus the Western nuclear powers (America, France, and Britain) under the supervision of Finns, Belgians, Poles, Norwegians, Danes,

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<sup>181</sup> "Až po šestiletém snažení má Praha členství v NATO jisté," Mladá fronta-DNES, July 9, 1997, p. 1.

Estonians, and the representatives of other small European nations for whom security policy in the 20th century had been a high-risk spectator sport.”<sup>182</sup> This vision was quickly abandoned. Václav Havel, President of the Czech Republic, proclaimed to a joint session of the United States Congress, it is untrue that he wanted to dismiss NATO.<sup>183</sup>

Subsequently, steps were focused on dismantling WTO (Warsaw Treaty Organisation) only. “At the June 1990 Moscow session of the PCC (Political Consultative Committee), the final Communique, written by the central Europeans, declared the end of the NATO-Warsaw Pact confrontation.”<sup>184</sup> On 26 February 1990, an agreement was signed for the complete withdrawal of Soviet forces from Czechoslovakia by 1 July 1991. The Warsaw treaty organization was officially dissolved on 1 July 1991. In the very early 1990's, the Czech policy makers also coordinated efforts in the so-called “Pentagonal Group” of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Austria, Yugoslavia, and Italy. At the Vienna meeting on 20 May 1990, the group agreed upon the mediation of conflicts over the treatment of ethnic minorities in central and southeast Europe through a CSCE agency.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Christopher Jones, “Czechoslovakia and the New International System” in European Security Policy After the Revolutions of 1989, ed. Jeffrey Simon (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1991), p. 311.

<sup>183</sup> “Joint Meeting of the House and Senate to Hear An Address by His Excellency Václav Havel ...,” 28 February 1990 in Congressional Record-House, 21 February 1990, pp. H 392-H 395.

<sup>184</sup> Christopher Jones, p. 316.

<sup>185</sup> Christopher Jones, p. 317.

A few months after the failed August 1991 *putsch* in the former Soviet Union, on October 6, 1991, the Ministries of Foreign affairs of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary expressed the wish to commit their countries to NATO activities.<sup>186</sup> On October 8, 1991, the Czechoslovakian government signed a treaty with Poland and later on with Hungary, to include “security clauses providing for assistance in the event that one of the partners is attacked.”<sup>187</sup> Ongoing regional cooperation was oriented toward NATO as a prospective pillar of European Security architecture. In November 1991, Czechoslovakia joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, “the primary medium for pan-European cooperation on security and stability,”<sup>188</sup> as a consultative body in security issues for former members of WTO.

In contrast, the obviously passive popular attitude of the Czechs to the Visegrad group (the Czech Republic, Slovakia (including Czechoslovakia before the division in 1993) Hungary, and Poland) was often criticized. Czech Prime Minister Klaus interpreted the Visegrad organization of Poland, Hungary, and the former Czechoslovakia that was formed in 1990 as “...an artificial one that the West foisted on

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<sup>186</sup> “Jak se ČR přibližovala Alianci,” Právo, July 1, 1997.

<sup>187</sup> Václav Havel, Summer Meditations, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1992), p. 95.

<sup>188</sup> Charles L. Barry, The Search for Peace in Europe: Perspectives from NATO and Eastern Europe, (Fort Lesley j. McNair: National Defense University Press, 1993), p. 300.



Prague to keep it out of the West...," and he "... obstructed any political or military cooperation under its auspices."<sup>189</sup>

Due to subsequent pressure however, within post-January 1994 efforts within PfiP, especially from the U.S., Prague began cooperating with Warsaw and Budapest on a regional air-defense network.<sup>190</sup> In addition, further military cooperation was developed. A result of this close two-year Czech-Polish military cooperation since 1995 has been the agreement to build Polish-Czech military units and to coordinate the purchase of western jet aircraft.<sup>191</sup>

Cooperation with Hungary was intensified as well. Twenty-seven joint military exercises will take place on Hungarian territory in 1997, and twenty-four in the Czech Republic. Hungary also expressed its concern to buy the new Czech L-159 subsonic aircrafts.<sup>192</sup> After the NATO summit of July, 1997 in Madrid, where the Alliance invited Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to join NATO in 1997, the Czech Republic held following meeting for the Ministries of Defense of the three invited countries in the Czech Republic. There, they agreed upon an intensification of

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<sup>189</sup> Stephan J. Blank, Prague, NATO and European Security, (Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: US Army War College, 1996), p. 3.

<sup>190</sup> Stephan J. Blank, p. 3.

<sup>191</sup> "Vznikne společná polsko-česká vojenská jednotka," Mladá fronta DNES, February 28, 1997.

<sup>192</sup> "Maďarsko chce česke stíhačky," Mladá fronta DNES, March 4, 1997.

cooperation with Eastern European countries that are being considered for the second wave of NATO enlargement.<sup>193</sup>

Cooperation was also tightening up to NATO. In April 1993, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexander Vondra publicly announced that the Czech Republic's aim to join NATO was final and unchangeable.<sup>194</sup> On 10 March 1994, the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic signed a framework document by which the Czech Republic subscribed to the project of the Partnership for Peace (PfP). Individual Programme of Partnership for Peace (IPP) of the Czech Republic, defining both political and military objectives of the country's co-operation with NATO, was signed on November 25, 1994.<sup>195</sup>

In addition to the multilateral cooperation in the PfP framework, bilateral cooperation agreements have also been developed. The most intensive contracts have been maintained with the armed forces of neighbor states and with the NATO states. In 1995, the Czech Army co-operated with 23 states on the basis of plans of bilateral cooperation or other agreements (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Rumania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the Ukraine, the USA).

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<sup>193</sup> Vladimír Dubský, *Lidové noviny*, October 13, 1997, p. 3. In this connection was mentioned Rumania, Slovenia, Ukraine and Baltic states. Statements about Slovakia were only careful.

<sup>194</sup> "Krvácet za české ideály," *Respekt*, January 12, 1997, No. 16, p. 3.

<sup>195</sup> White Paper on Defence of the Czech Republic (1995), p. 12

The dimensions of cooperation with the USA are unique. It is implemented through the Contact Team of the US Armed Forces in Prague within US Eucom Joint Military to Military Contact Program and through the Security Assistance Office (SAO) of the US Embassy in Prague. In 1996, the US government, through the SAO, provided almost \$1 million to the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program of which this author is a beneficiary and almost \$9 million to the Foreign Military Sale (FMS) program, of which \$2 million was designated for English-language training of Czech military personnel in the Czech Republic, a crucial aspect of interoperability in NATO.<sup>196</sup>

*b. Policy Coordination*

Together with the prospect that the Czech Republic is likely to receive full membership in NATO in 1997, the security and defense policy of the Czech Republic is becoming more and more subordinated to future needs expected to arise from the Alliance membership.

The 1995 White Paper stipulated that full NATO membership is a primary objective of the Czech Republic in ensuring its security.<sup>197</sup> On 15 March 1996 the Czechs

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<sup>196</sup> Data provided by negotiations, that author participated in.

<sup>197</sup> White Paper on Defence of the Czech Republic (1995), pp. 9 and 12. "The Czech Republic considers NATO to be at present the basic functional security institution in Europe, which guarantees the Transatlantic alliance, and on which the stability and security of Europe

established a special committee of foreign and defense Ministry personnel - supplemented by representatives from finance, industry and trade - to coordinate all activities regarding NATO integration and to produce a "National Plan of Compatibility with NATO."<sup>198</sup> In addition, the Czech Republic makes some doctrinal documents according to NATO one. This was confirmed by the Czech Minister of Defense when the concept of a national defense strategy was proposed at the session of government in the end of the 1996.<sup>199</sup> Despite these positive steps toward integration into NATO, it is commonly believed, both by the Czech media and the US administration,<sup>200</sup> that more could be done in preparation of joining NATO.

*c. Risk Sharing*

Since the very beginning of its existence, the post-communist government proved that it is ready to share the risks in promoting world peace and security through NATO. Czech soldiers carry out tasks in a number of peacekeeping or peace support

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and the world depend. It plays an important role in securing the process of transformations in Europe." This document itself an outgrowth of PfP and bilateral cooperation.

<sup>198</sup> OMRI Daily Digest, 19 March 1996, p. 4.

<sup>199</sup> "Národní obranná strategie," Respekt, January 26, no. 420.

<sup>200</sup> "Výborný chystá změny v resortu," Lidové noviny, October 10, 1997, p. 2. "Frederick Pang, US Deputy Minister of Defense, pointed out shortcomings in connection with ongoing the Czech Republic's enter in NATO yesterday." Also: "Tvrdě kritizovaná Praha se snaží rychle udobřit NATO," MF Dnes, October 3, 1997, p. 1.



operations and missions, both as military observers and as members of contingents.<sup>201</sup> In 1990, the former Czechoslovakia sent a military contingent to the Gulf War. A special chemical unit of 200 men accomplished its mission on the side of US-led coalition.<sup>202</sup> The Czech battalion of 1,000 men was engaged in both UNPROFOR and IFOR operations on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.<sup>203</sup> Thus the Czech Republic has shown great willingness to meet the goals of NATO's Partnership for Peace, since participation in this program is necessary to join the Alliance.

The next factor affecting the Czech Republic's posture in risk-sharing is the question of nuclear forces and the Alliance's troop deployment on Czech territory. Despite the fact that "forward defense" is not on the table now, public polls show that question of nuclear forces deployment is relatively sensitive. Only 18 percent would support NATO membership, if it meant deploying nuclear weapons on Czech soil.<sup>204</sup> In early January 1996, the government approved a law prohibiting any kind of nuclear weapons on the territory of the Czech Republic. Since the language in the bill raised

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<sup>201</sup> White Paper on Defence of the Czech Republic (1995), p. 11. "Until May 1995 more than 4,000 members of the military forces were involved in the UN and OSCE missions. The experience of the Czechoslovak Army of sending military observers dates from 1989 when in January (sic) Czechoslovakia was asked to participate in the UNAVEM mission in Angola (sic) and in March of the same year in the UNTAG mission in Namibia. In total, 453 military observers have operated in 14 missions of the United Nations, the European Union and the OSCE on the territory of 10 states - Angola, Georgia, Iraq, former Yugoslavia, Korea, Liberia, Moldavia, Mozambique, Namibia, Somalia, up to 1 March 1995."

<sup>202</sup> White Paper on Defence of the Czech Republic (1995), p. 11.

<sup>203</sup> White Paper on Defence of the Czech Republic (1995), p. 11.

<sup>204</sup> Mladá fronta DNES, 23 May, 1996, p. 2.



questions about whether this restriction would have a negative impact on the Czech Republic's ability to join NATO,<sup>205</sup> when the Parliament's Budget Committee approved the law on 28 March, it added the following amendment: "unless an international treaty states otherwise."<sup>206</sup>

As far as deployment of foreign troops on the Czech soil, Article 39 of the Constitution of the Czech Republic demands approval from both chambers of Parliament.<sup>207</sup> On 29 April 1994, Parliament approved the government proposal to permit short-term military training and exercises on Czech soil (5,000 foreign troops for up to 30 days).<sup>208</sup>

Although Czechs are aware of the plausible risks resulting from participation in peacekeeping operations, they continue to contribute to the promotion of peace and security.<sup>209</sup> Because of their experiences in the WTO, the Czech people at peace time would not support the deployment of nuclear forces or foreign troops on their soil.

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<sup>205</sup> Mladá fronta DNES, 5 February 1996, p. 1.

<sup>206</sup> Česká tisková agentura, 28 March 1996.

<sup>207</sup> Constitution of the Czech Republic, Article 39, paragraph (3). "Decisions on declarations of war and approval of the presence of foreign troops on the territory of the Czech Republic shall require the consent of more than half of all Deputies and more than half of all Senators."

<sup>208</sup> FBIS-EEU-94-117 (17 June 1994), p. 13.

<sup>209</sup> "Koncepce výstavby armády počítá s osmi možnými riziky ohrožení," Slovo, April 21, 1997, p. 1.

*d. Burden Sharing*

At the stage as of late 1997 of the Czech Republic's integration process into the Alliance, the notion of burden-sharing includes, in the short term, a contribution to UN/CSCE peacekeeping operations, and, in the long-term, the buildup of forces which will be able to operate better with NATO forces.<sup>210</sup> Indeed, when it becomes a member of the Alliance, the Czech Republic will cover 0.9 percent of the annual NATO budget for the first year, which is about \$15 million (Poland 2.48 percent or \$42 mil., Hungary 0.65 percent or \$11mil.). Although the current level of contributions to the UN/OSCE peacekeeping operations are satisfactory, the allocation of resources for building up the Czech Army has been found by NATO to be insufficient, and has been heavily criticized, especially by the USA.<sup>211</sup>

However, the Czech government has been focusing on economic reforms, and critical reductions in the military budget, from about 25 percent of the state budget before 1990<sup>212</sup> to 2.3 percent in 1995.<sup>213</sup> As social and welfare programs have been radically reduced in scale, so have military expenditures. In fact, the military lacks housing for over 3,000 officers and their families.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Programme Partnership for Peace

<sup>211</sup> Jan Gazdik, "Kongres přeje vstupu zemí do NATO, nad stavem obrany však nejásá," Mlada fronta DNES, May 21, 1997.

<sup>212</sup> Jones, p. 311.

<sup>213</sup> White Paper on Defence of the Czech Republic (1995), Fig. V/4.

<sup>214</sup> Prague denni Telegraf, 21 November 1995, p. 2.

The cuts of the military budget, moreover, have struck not only the personal lives of military personnel, but also the direct readiness of the armed forces in general. In 1995, the Air Force received only 25 percent of the resources that was requested for operations, which caused a lack of funds for spare parts and fuel. Thus, pilots were flying only 50 hours per year, seriously below NATO standards.<sup>215</sup>

As a direct consequence of the worsening economic situation in the Spring of 1997, further reductions were made in the military budget in April. To save money, the Ministry of Defense canceled all upgrading projects which had not yet been contracted. On June 7, 1997, Minister of Defense Vyborný announced that “the military was forced by restrictions to live on threshold values.”<sup>216</sup> At the end of July 1997, the Minister announced to the government that half the aircrafts belonging to the tactical air force were not able to fly.<sup>217</sup>

Trends in defense expenditures also directly influence other defense resources. In searching for spares, military units, unlike recently approved defense planes, will leave 43 military garrisons until 2000.<sup>218</sup> Consequently, young officers, including those educated in western military academies and war colleges, have been leaving the

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<sup>215</sup> Jeffrey Simon, NATO Enlargement, p. 227.

<sup>216</sup> Jan Gazdik, “Výborný: Armáda už nyní žije na prahových hodnotách,” Mladá fronta DNES, June 7, 1997.

<sup>217</sup> Jaroslav Kmenta, “Polovina strojů taktického letectva není schopna letu,” Mladá fronta - DNES, August 8, 1997.

<sup>218</sup> “Armáda opouští 43 měst a obcí,” Právo, May 28, 1997.

military services.<sup>219</sup> Annually, about 2,500 officers, out of a total of about 24,000 officer corps, leave the military service; the most common reasons given are the bad situation in the military, and low prospects for their career.<sup>220</sup> During the work on the budget proposal for 1998, moreover, the Minister of Finance increased general anxiety by his request not to increase the defense budget, despite a recent government decision to do so.<sup>221</sup> After pressure from the US administration, the Czech government promised to increase the annual defense budget to 0.1 percent, amounting to a total budget expenditure of 2.7 percent in 2000.

While the Czech Republic actively participates in UN/OSCE peacekeeping operations, its contributions to its own defense are totally insufficient. Given proclamations of the Czech government that the Czech Republic is ready to subordinate to the Alliance in case of need 90 percent of the military units,<sup>222</sup> cannot remove the critical doubts among allies about whether the Czech Republic's contributions to the concept of collective defense have been worthwhile.

What are the main points of the Czech Republic's security and defense policy? In its security policy (after overcoming naive notions about a revolutionary rebuilding of the

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<sup>219</sup> "Výborný chystá změny v resortu," *Lidové Noviny*, October 10, 1997, p. 1.

<sup>220</sup> Jan Gazdik, "Armádě hrozí naprosté vylidnění," *Mladá fronta - DNES*, June 22, 1997.

<sup>221</sup> "V ODS se rozhořela bitva o armádu," *Mladá fronta - DNES*, September 5, 1997.

<sup>222</sup> "Tvrdě kritizovaná Praha se snaží udobřit NATO," *Mladá fronta DNES*, October 3, 1997, p. 8.

European security architecture, and attempts to resuscitate an extended Little Entente) the Czechoslovak government turned toward NATO. The Czech government decided to stay on this track, and, moreover, deepen cooperation and attain full integration in the Alliance.

Regarding defense cooperation, the Czech Republic, after US critics, overcame its initial reluctance to cooperate closely with the countries of the Visegrad group. Cooperation with NATO partners was developed within the individual program Partnership for Peace and bilateral agreements, with special emphasize placed on developing close cooperation with the USA.

Regarding policy coordination, the Czech Republic has, because of its desire to become a member of NATO, subordinated its defense policy to NATO. The military doctrine was based on the goal to attain full compatibility with NATO. However, the Czech public is convinced that the government does not pay enough attention to the Czech Republic's integrating process to NATO.

Although the officials of the Alliance assured Czech citizens that NATO does not aim to deploy nuclear forces or the Alliance's troops in the country,<sup>223</sup> the Czech legislature has left its options open and enables deployment both nuclear forces and foreign troops on the Czech soil. Credible burden-sharing still remains as a problem. Although the limited engagement of of the Czech contingent in the US-led coalition in the Gulf War and in the former Yugoslavia was seen as positive by western allies, the

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<sup>223</sup> "Solana: NATO nechystá nové rozmístění jaderných zbraní," *Právo*, February 13, 1997, p. 4.



process of building up efficient armed forces has been seen as critical by future NATO partners. As a result, the Czech government, under pressure from the US in this phase of integration into NATO, has been willing to revise its decisions and allocate a greater share of the state budget to defense expenses.

## **2. Strategic Political Culture**

The evolution of the strategic political culture of the transitional, post-communist Czech society was initially characterized by strong political consensus on the political-reform procedures to attain civilian-democratic control over the military. Afterwards however, certain defense issues were politicized and became subject to disputes within the government coalition. This process was accompanied by apathy among Czech citizens, caused partially by the traditionally low status of the military in society, and partially by the nonpersuasive performance of government officials. External pressure from future allies partially restored the necessary consensus for implementing the defense policy.

### ***a. Political Consensus***

Political consensus is the core of a pluralistic democracy. A high measure of consensus over a large part of the domestic political spectrum is fuel for a transition to democracy. Needless to say, the means of attaining political consensus is one factor that

distinguishes democracy from authoritarian regimes. In a democracy, consensus is a process rather than a mandate. If consensus is attained through a process of discussing opinions among competitive political strengths from the bottom to the top, then it is democratic. If the consensus is the result of an authority's directive from the top to the bottom, then it is dictatorial. Once consensus is achieved democratically, it becomes stronger by virtue of its ability to conform to the times. Thus, the means of attaining political consensus in the Czech Republic, from the bottom to the top, has generated mild optimism, even though the current level of consensus needs to change dramatically.

Firstly, the government coalition (the rightist ODS, the right-centrist ODA, and the Christian democratic KDU-CSL) is not cohesive enough. The coalition partners ODS and ODA have politicized defense policy issues in order to advance in the struggle for power inside the coalition against the KDU-CSL, the ruling Ministry of Defense of the Czech Republic since January 1993.<sup>224</sup> On one hand, the ODS and ODA vehemently criticize the problems in the military, while rejecting co-accountability for defense policy at the same time.<sup>225</sup> On the other hand, they refuse all KDU-CSL initiatives in military sale and/or acquisition projects,<sup>226</sup> in military doctrine,<sup>227</sup> and in legislative issues to improve the situation in the Czech Army. This is all carried out while the

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<sup>224</sup> Jeffrey Simon, NATO Enlargement and Central Europe, (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1996), p. 216.

<sup>225</sup> "Klaus dává ruce pryč od obrany," *Lidové noviny*, October 21, 1997, p. 2.

<sup>226</sup> Jeffrey Simon, NATO, p. 229.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., pp.232-233.

defense budget, as a percentage of GDP, has been reduced step by step.<sup>228</sup> The ODA and ODS refused to increase the defense budget unless the KDU-CSL makes it more transparent.<sup>229</sup> These struggles within the governing coalition eroded initial consensus over military reform policy in the early 1990's.

Secondly, major political opposition (the Social Democrats - CSSD) has not been persuasive enough. This phenomenon is caused by Social Democrats' fuzzy posture with respect to the Czech Republic's membership in NATO, and they give weak public support to the party's electoral program containing support for NATO. The CSSD supports the country's admission into NATO, but it insists that the Czech Republic pass a referendum, something which is not allowed for in the Czech constitution, but which the CSSD wants to change through the passing of a bill authorizing the referendum.<sup>230</sup> The party claims further that it would not consider the result of the referendum as an obligatory consideration in government decision-making. Moreover, support among CSSD voters to join NATO is at its lowest. According to a poll by the IVVM (Institut pro vyzkum verejneho mineni - Institut for Survey of Public Poles) in April 1997, only 29 percent of CSSD voters support joining NATO (83 percent ODS, 61 percent ODA, and 53 percent KDU-CSL).<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 223 and 236.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 231.

<sup>230</sup> "Referendum dostalo šanci jen na chvíli," *Mladá fronta DNES*, October 16, 1997, p. 2.

<sup>231</sup> "Koalice, opozice a NATO," *Právo*, April 29, 1997, p.2.

Thirdly, the marginal parties of the political spectrum (the extremely right-wing SPR-RPSC and the extremely left-wing KSCM) clearly formulated an attitude towards NATO enlargement. Both the Republicans (SPR-RPSC), with 8 percent of the electorate in the 1996 elections, and the Communists (KSCM), with 10.3 percent, are strictly against joining NATO. In addition, the KSCM boasts a charismatic personality in the figure of Miroslav Vacek, the former Minister of Defense, a politician who also enjoys the confidence of post-communist president Havel, and has a great deal of military expertise.<sup>232</sup>

Finally, interest groups have not developed the necessary pressure to influence major elements of the political spectrum. Early after 1990, some new associations emerged and committed themselves fairly resolutely to exert democratic pressure in order to attain civilian control over the military. The Association of Military Renewal (SVO) participated in the development of military doctrine; the Union of Professional Soldiers (SVP) defended the social welfare of servicemen and participated in cadre issues; and the Congress of the Free Legion (SL) promoted the goals of reducing army enrollment, professionalizing the force, and reducing a mandatory military service to 12-month. However, there are serious doubts about their influence in the process of expanding the military, since they have essentially disappeared from public life. Overall, their influence was diminished not only by enormous reductions in military production, but also by the dis-acknowledgement of the RDP Group (a consortium of armament companies) by the Ministry of Defense. A more influential role can be expected of the

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<sup>232</sup> Jones, "Czechoslovakia and the New International System," p. 315.

new Association of the Defense Industry, founded in the second half of 1997, and linking 60 domestic companies.

Thus, the effort to unify the strengths of Czech political spectrum around long-term goals of defense policy is still fragmented due to political discrepancies within the governing coalition, to ambiguous support by major political opposition groups, to the decisively negative attitude of marginal parties who represent 18% of the electorate, and to the impotence of interest groups. Such a low political consensus must affect the support of citizens negatively.

#### *b. Support of Citizens*

Robert Putnam, among others, has expressed the importance of “social capital” in democracy.<sup>233</sup> Support among the citizenry, a basic element of the social capital, is important both for great and small democratic states alike. Since the Czech people put more trust in the economic reforms of the post-communist transitional government than they put into the political reforms, their support for defense policy is generally very low. According to the IVVM, only 34 percent of the citizens trusted the Czech Army in October 1997, and 52 percent did not.<sup>234</sup> The confidence level is low

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<sup>233</sup> Robert D. Putnam, Making Democracy Work, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 167-176.

<sup>234</sup> “Armádě věří jen třetina,” *Právo*, October 22, 1997, p. 2.



among the Czech people not only in relation to their own military, but also in relation to NATO.

After the beginning of governmental campaign to increase support of citizens to NATO, which started immediately before NATO Summit in Madrid (July 8, 1997), a stable 46 percent of the citizens supported the Alliance in July 1997.<sup>235</sup> Jan Herzmann, director of the survey company “Factum,” summarized the causes of the low 37 percent support among citizens for NATO in June 1997: above all current economic and political situation and connecting uncertainty of peoples. The public does not feel any immediate threat. In fact, 52 percent of the opponents to NATO membership criticize the perceived financial costs of NATO membership.<sup>236</sup>

In another survey, a strong correlation between negative sentiment and certain economic figures was also found. That is, together with decline in supporters of NATO membership, from 60 percent in October 1993 to 47 percent in March 1996,<sup>237</sup> Nominal Wage Growth declined from 25.3 percent in 1993 to 18 percent in 1996.<sup>238</sup> Recent polls showing support for joining NATO among about half of the population<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> “Počet přívrženců vstupu ČR do NATO se nemění, odpůrců je již méně,” Slovo, July 22, 1997.

<sup>236</sup> “Podpora pro NATO nebyla vysoká, přesto ještě opadla,” Mladá fronta - DNES, July 28, 1997.

<sup>237</sup> “STEM: Pro NATO je 49%,” Mladá fronta - DNES, July 7, 1997.

<sup>238</sup> Mladá fronta - DNES, April 17, 1997.

<sup>239</sup> “Do NATO mají vést vůdci, ne veřejné mínění,” Mladá fronta - DNES, October 9, 1997, p. 12.

are alarming when contrasted with the 90 percent support among Polish citizens for NATO enlargement.<sup>240</sup> As J. Simon concludes in his study about NATO enlargement, "It seems that one of the Czech government's most difficult tasks will be to 'sell' NATO to Czech society...."<sup>241</sup>

### *c. Public Support of Political Leaders*

Support of Czech politicians varies from person to person, but it is considered as generally lackluster in Czech society.<sup>242</sup> In contrast, President Vaclav Havel has fervently supported NATO enlargement. He appeals to two audiences: domestic and international. He explains in his interviews and speeches the reasons why the Czech Republic should join NATO, while pointing out the democratic character of NATO at the same time. He formulated his reasons for joining NATO as early as November 1993, which are basically that "no large European conflict has left Central Europe untouched, the Czech Republic is part of West European civilization and shares NATO's values, and the Czech Republic's geopolitical situation is precarious."<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> Andrea Zajícová, "ČR a Polsko nevylučují společnou deklaraci k NATO, uvedl Pithart," Mladá fronta - DNES, April 14, 1997.

<sup>241</sup> Jeffrey Simon, p. 242 and "Plán komunikace s veřejností k připravenosti Armády České republiky přispět k integraci České Republiky do NATO" (Prague: Ministry of Defense, Czech Republic, September 1997), pp. 1-3.

<sup>242</sup> "Do NATO mají vést vůdci, ne veřejné mínění," Mladá fronta - DNES, October 9, 1997, p. 12.

<sup>243</sup> James W. Morrison, NATO Expansion and Alternative Future Security Alignments, (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1995), p. 80.

However, he was convinced of NATO's democratic character even in 1991, as can be gleaned from his comments, with an obvious reference to the Prague Spring of 1968:

NATO is truly a defensive organization, and truly democratic: members can withdraw at any time, and they have equal rights within it. Realistically, the Americans have and will always have a greater say in NATO than, say, Portugal; still, nothing would happen to Portugal were it to decide to quit NATO or eliminate NATO bases on its territory.<sup>244</sup>

Since Havel believes that membership in the alliance does not restrict state sovereignty, he refuses to hold a referendum that might threaten the Czech Republic's acceptance into NATO.

With respect to the international audience, the President appeals to decision-makers both in Europe and in the United States to influence the ratification of NATO enlargement in the Czech Republic's favor. While receiving the Fulbright Award in the USA in October of 1997, he warned against American isolationism and pointed out the role of America in the diversified and decentralized world after the fall of the iron curtain.<sup>245</sup>

A week later in the Council of Europe, Havel addressed European governments and warned them against selfishness.<sup>246</sup> This can be interpreted as an effort to compel European governments to consider the US administration's demand that they share a larger portion of NATO enlargement expenses.

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<sup>244</sup> Václav Havel, Summer Meditations, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), p. 92.

<sup>245</sup> "Czech Republic: President Havel Says NATO Expansion Can Prevent War," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, October 6, 1997.

<sup>246</sup> "Václav Havel varoval Evropu před sobectvím," Lidové noviny, October 13, 1997, p. 9.

In sharp contrast to the President's effort is the Prime Minister's passivity. While entirely neglecting domestic citizens, Václav Klaus proclaimed at the EU Summit on December 9, 1994 that: "When (sic) emphasize our ambitions regarding NATO, I emphasize the demand for an American presence in Europe...."<sup>247</sup> This was seen as a positive signal. However, Klaus limited his coverage of the NATO issue in subsequent addresses to international audiences to ensuring western allies that the Czech government is ready to keep its promise to increase its defense budget.<sup>248</sup> This downward trend in coverage happened even after the open criticisms of former US Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

Josef Zieleniec, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, demonstrated public support for NATO enlargement only formally. In his arguments, he emphasized the geo-strategic situation of the country and the share of responsibility the Alliance bore in maintaining a fifty-year peace in Europe.<sup>249</sup> His decision to appoint his Deputy Minister to replace him in negotiations with the Alliance after the NATO Summit in Madrid was perceived, however, as a negative signal. Unlike the Czech Republic, the Polish and Hungarian delegations were headed by their Ministers of Foreign Affairs. In October

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<sup>247</sup> James W. Morrison, NATO Expansion and Alternative Future Security Alignments, (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1995), p. 81.

<sup>248</sup> Michal Mocek, "Klaus potvrdil odpor k referendu o NATO," Mladá fronta - DNES, May 19, 1997, and "Podle Klause je ČR připravena dokončit transformaci armády," Mladá fronta - DNES, June 24, 1997, and Jiří Kubík, "Klaus slíbil, že se armádní rozpočet zvýší," Mladá fronta - DNES, September 6, 1997.

<sup>249</sup> "Jsem také ministr těch občanů, co nejsou pro vstup do alliance," Právo, April 12, 1997, p. 3.



1997, Zieleniec resigned and was replaced by Jaroslav Šedivý, Ambassador to Belgium. It is generally expected that Šedivý will fulfill well the role of the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the process of integrating the Czech Republic into NATO.

The strategic political culture of the Czech Republic is in the process of democratic development. Its main characteristics are: 1) a low level of political consensus in constructive phase of national defense reform (which was caused by the politicizing of defense policy issues); 2) a low level of support for security and defense policy among Czech citizens; 3) a unilateral effort among political elites to emphasize to the Alliance the domestic shortcomings of Czech participation in NATO, instead of galvanizing Czech citizens to support defense policies; and 4) a lack of will and discipline within the domestic political spectrum to subordinate local short-term interests to national long-term defense policy objectives. The necessary level of political consensus has only been reached after an external impulse from the leading member of the Alliance.





#### IV. CONCLUSIONS: LESSONS FOR THE CZECH REPUBLIC

This part of the study summarizes the experiences that put the Dutch on the road to such a profitable position for a small state in the Alliance. Then it will analyze the main correlations between the Dutch and Czech cases. Afterwards, the study will review the main characteristics of the Czech republic's position in NATO. Finally, certain recommendations for the Czech policy-makers will be proposed.

##### A. DUTCH EXPERIENCE

The Netherlands of the 1990's is seen as a reliable ally within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It enjoys high esteem among its partners in the coalition. The Dutch officials and military participate actively in various executive positions within the Alliance's institutional structures. Their influence on the decision-making process is remarkable. Moreover, the Dutch armed forces cooperate in important tasks in the defense of the Alliance.<sup>250</sup> However, such a respectable position was not destiny. It was developed deliberately by a generation of Dutch policy makers.

Taking into consideration all the constraints on the Dutch resulting from its national history, its geo-strategic situation and its economic situation, the Dutch post World War II government decided to reorient security and defense policy and make the strategic decision to join the Alliance with other western democracies.

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<sup>250</sup> Peter M. Volten, "The Dutch Contribution to NATO" in NATO-Warsaw Pact Mobilization, ed. Jeffrey Simon, (Washington, DC: The National Defense University Press, 1988), pp. 435-436.

The specific historical factors which influenced that decision were: 1) the decline of its colonial power and its transformation into a small power in international affairs; 2) its precarious policy of neutrality and its inability to protect itself from larger powers; 3) the large spectrum of consequences from World War II for the Dutch nation and country; and 4) circumstances, threats, and risks in the post World War II disorder.

The Dutch geo-strategic constraints were not any less important, however. Located at the crossroads of Western Europe between two great powers, the Netherlands, though possessing strategic energetic deposits, is small, with large part of its terrain under sea level.

Finally, a lack of logical harmony between the economic policy and the security system, significant economic exploitation of the country during the Nazi occupation, and a plan for economic recovery were the economic factors that, along with the historical experience and geographical limits, led the Dutch to abandon its policy of neutrality and participate in building a democratic collective defense system, at first through the Brussels Treaty and later, in 1949, through NATO.

Having made this important strategic decision, the Netherlands began its hard work of position-building within the Alliance. The Dutch Security and defense policy and strategic political culture were the primary position-building modulators in that process. The security and defense policy conducted during the beginning of the Netherlands' membership in the organization was distinguished by a high degree of conformity to NATO's strategic concept, a high degree of close defense cooperation with allies, and a

pragmatic attitude towards demands for risk-taking and burden-sharing in collective defense.

This policy approach was strengthened even further by the strategic political culture of the Dutch. This mature political culture has been noted for cohesive political consensus on security and defense issues, overwhelming public support of political leaders involved in Euro-Atlantic defense, and support of the government's security and defense policy by a majority of Dutch citizens.

This security and defense policy, which is supported by the strategic political culture and which respects the historical, geo-strategic and economic constraints that led to alignment, has built up for the Netherlands a position of reliable ally in NATO. This position within the Alliance has enabled the Netherlands to enjoy a high level of security from collective defense.

## **B. COMPARISON OF THE DUTCH AND CZECH CASES**

This part of the thesis compared both case studies and analyzed their similarities and differences in order to discover opportunities and constraints in the process of the Czech Republic's position-building within NATO.

### **1. Lessons from History**

Although the historical events of the two countries have taken place in different places and at different times, there are some general similarities. First, both states

became small powers after having been larger. This “smallness,” in turn, limited their security options.

Second, both states had exercised foreign policies based on concepts other than collective defense. In both cases, this crucial mistake paved the way for a rapid occupation by a neighboring great power, namely, Germany.

Third, the invasion in both cases had critical consequences for the state and nation. Moreover, Czechoslovakia repeated this critical mistake once again when it allied with others in an undemocratic system of collective defense.

These experiences, together with uncertainties, threats, and risks at the time of strategic decision-making, led to the decision to join the democratic system of collective defense after World War II in the Dutch case, and after the Cold War in the Czech case.

## **2. Geo-strategic Situations**

The two countries also share similarities in their geographical locations at two different crossroads of European powers. Both states, lying as they do on the boundaries of NATO, serve as buffer states for Germany and the strategic NATO facilities placed there. Both countries also have strategic natural resources. And while the terrain in both countries provides no added natural protection, the Netherlands’ low altitude actually increase vulnerability of the state. Also, unlike the Netherlands, the Czech Republic is a landlocked country, and this fact reduces country’s opportunity to contribute to naval defense of the Alliance.



### 3. Economic Factors

The Netherlands as well as Czechoslovakia learned the lesson that discrepancies between their respective economic policies and systems of external security increase the threat to a small state's security. Both countries learned that a weak security system can encourage an aggressor to take over a small state's developed economy. To avoid recent mistakes, both countries aligned their respective strategic-economic and security decisions during their effort to attain a quick economic recovery and long-term prosperity.

In comparing the constraints from Dutch history with the equivalent constraints in the Czech case, it seems that there are either no or few Dutch historical specifics in that regard which have determined the destiny of the Dutch position in NATO. In determining its own destiny, however, the Czech Republic has emphasized the circumstances of the Munich Agreement of 1938<sup>251</sup> and the events in Prague during the Spring of 1968.

The Czech Republic, also unlike the Netherlands, has no direct access to the ocean. And as the socialist state-planned economy, with its extended social and welfare programs, is being replaced by free market relations. The Czech Republic, in its

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<sup>251</sup> Václav Havel, Summer Meditations, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), p. 95. President Václav Havel's memories on signing the first postcommunist era agreements illustrate the place of the Munich Agreement in the collective memory of the Czech. nation: "We signed a treaty with Italy on July 1, 1991. The most important aspect of it, particularly given our bilateral treaty with Germany, is a declaration that the Munich Agreement of 1938 - seeding (sic) Sudetenland to Germany - was null and void from the beginning. A treaty with France, signed on October 8, 1991, also contains a 'Munich ' paragraph."

attempt to make the transition to this free-market economy, has had to rebuild its entire economic infrastructure.

#### **4. Security and Defense Policies**

The security and defense policies of both countries also share similarities. Firstly, both governments hoped enthusiastically for a system of collective security. Although they have both abandoned the idea of collective security as the main guarantor of their external security, they still highly support the United Nations as the main promotor of peace and security in the world. Indeed, small states in general typically find this forum to be a vehicle through which to discipline great powers verbally, a moralistic tendency which applies to the Netherlands and the Czech Republic as well.

Secondly, while the Netherlands has developed a high level of cooperation in all areas of defense with special emphasis on regional cooperation and trans-Atlantic links, the cooperation of the Czech Republic within the Central European region has been developed step by step with special bilateral attention always paid to the United States.

Thirdly, the security and defense policy of the Netherlands is fully subordinated to NATO's strategic concept. The Czech Republic has taken similar practical steps toward harmonizing its doctrinal documents in this regard.

Finally, both countries are ready to share the risks of collective defense and security. Both the Netherlands and the Czech Republic participated to a limited degree in the Gulf War and in the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. Both countries have participated in various UN missions and peacekeeping operations. While the Netherlands

has already fulfilled its nuclear obligations and built international military units, the legislative provisions of the Czech constitution do not exclude the chance to employ nuclear means of strategic deterrence or NATO troops. Both countries, however, have military systems based on conscription, which causes certain difficulties in the rapid deployment of armed forces in “out-of-NATO areas.”

The essential difference between the two countries is in their respective readiness to share the current burden of collective defense. While the Dutch economy enables the Dutch to allocate relatively large resources to its defense budget, the Czech Republic has reduced its defense budget to what it considers a more acceptable level. Historically however, the Netherlands was also extremely reluctant to increase defense expenses during the initial phase of its NATO membership. Coincidentally, both countries, in order not to threaten their transatlantic links, were willing to increase their defense spending after assertive pressure from the American administration.

## **5. Strategic Political Cultures**

Similar to the case of the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, J. A. Luns, the Czech Republic found an outstanding supporter of Euro-Atlantic defense in the person of President Vaclav Havel. Unlike in the Netherlands, politicians in the Czech Republic do not propagandize their security and defense policy among the Czech population. Consequently, Czechs have little confidence in their armed forces and tend not to support the integration of the Czech Republic into NATO. Moreover, unlike the strong political consensus in the Netherlands at the time of its accession to NATO, the Czech Republic's

political spectrum is critically fragmented in terms of opinions on the implementation of security and defense policy.

The specifics of the Dutch security and defense policy and strategic political culture which contributed most significantly to the image of the Dutch as a reliable ally are: 1) its high level of regional cooperation within Europe and its close bilateral cooperation with USA; 2) the subordination of its military doctrine to the NATO agenda; 3) its participation in risk-sharing and burden-sharing; 4) its upgraded armed forces; 5) its strong political consensus on, and relatively strong citizen support of security and defense policy; and 6) the fact that its political leaders dealing with security and defense policy enjoy great support in society, and have, themselves, a great deal of impact on the citizens.

The constraints that have had a negative impact on Czech Republic's beginning position in the Alliance can be gleaned from an analysis of the position-building modulators: a weak economy, weak armed forces, a military concept based on conscription, traditionally low support of the military within society,<sup>252</sup> and little political consensus.

On the other hand, the factors operating in the Czech Republic that imply opportunity are: 1) its tendency to use moral appeal in international relations; 2) its promotion of regional cooperation among NATO partners of the same political,

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<sup>252</sup> Jones, "The Czechoslovak Armed Forces," p. 217. "... the 'success' of such efforts showed up in in mid-1960s public opinion polls that indicated that ranked [sic] military officers below sewage workers in perceived status! Of the 28 professions listed in the survey, the military profession ranked 25th."



economic, military, social, and cultural backgrounds; 3) its close relationship with the United States; 4) its continual process of subordinating security and defense policy to NATO's policies; 5) its readiness to share collective-defense risks; 6) its participation in UN missions and operations; and 7) its willingness to share in important defense tasks resulting from its location on the boundaries of the alliance.

### **C. REFLECTIONS OF THE FUTURE ROLE THE CZECH REPUBLIC IN NATO**

As can be interpreted from the previous analyses, the Czech Republic may not easily expect any special position within NATO that would allow greater influence in the decision making-process. The Czech Republic will belong to a category of smaller NATO members, composed currently of the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Portugal and Greece. From strategic point of view, the Czech Republic will be become attached under the Supreme Allied Commander (SHAPE) in Europe (SACEUR). From a regional point of view, the Czech Republic will be under the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces of Central Europe (CINCENT).<sup>253</sup>

Since the new military structure will have headquarters only in the North and South, the Czech Republic will belong to the North command, together with Germany and Poland. Thus, Czech Republic's partner in NATO will be the USA and its troops located in Germany, Poland, Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, and

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<sup>253</sup> "Kde bude naše místo v Severoatlantické alianci," Mladá fronta DNES, October 10, 1997, p. 12.



Norway.<sup>254</sup> Within that group the Czech Republic will play, of course, a role similar to that of the Netherlands, Denmark, and Norway: a buffer state on NATO's northern boundaries.

The contribution of the Czech Republic will also be limited in several ways. Since the Czech Republic is a landlocked country without direct access to the ocean, such future contribution to collective defense will be limited to such cases as are Luxembourg and Hungary. As far as Czech air and ground support is concerned however, Czech equipment is obsolete, its crews are not sufficiently trained, and the officer corps is demoralized by several factors, including the slow progress of defense reform, and economic constraints on the armed forces. Moreover, anti-air defense, which will likely be the Czech Republic's main task in the alliance, is based on obsolete Soviet equipment. Overall therefore, the Czech Republic may well be seen by critics and allies more as a consumer of security benefits than as a contributor to collective defense.

Nevertheless, due to the Czech geographical location of the country, its large industrial base, and its tradition in armament production, the Atlantic allies will provide both assistance and surely apply pressure at the same time to force the Czech government to build up credible defense capabilities. At the same time, however, the country will be seen by the allies as a junior partner, willing to share risks but needing a certain level of senior leadership to attain the desired level of interoperability. To attain this level as soon as possible, the Czech Republic's government must alter certain crucial points in its security and defense policy, and develop some it already has even further.

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<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

## **D. RECOMMENDATIONS**

What should the Czech Republic do in order to attain a better position within NATO? Together with economic growth, the Czech policy makers must view national security as its highest priority. The importance of this issue is clear from an analysis of the historical, geo-strategical and economic factors affecting the Czech Republic. Thus far, however, the words and deeds of the Czech Republic do not match. In the area of the security and defense policy, Czech policy makers must:

- re-adopt the security and defense policy initiatives that Czechoslovakia maintained in the early 1990's concerning the Middle European region, and deepen its cooperation within the Visegrad group and other regional PFP partners with Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and NATO membership frameworks;
- intensify the process of interoperability its policy doctrines, norms and systems to those of NATO in order to attain compatibility, standardization, interchangeability, and commonality within the larger organization;
- maintain the current level of contributions to UN missions and peacekeeping operations;
- allocate more resources without delay in order to start the systematic and buildup of small, yet modern and efficient armed forces;
- whenever possibly together with democratic processes generate the necessary level of cohesive political consensus to meet objectives of the security and defense policy;
- formalize a clear Czech posture regarding issues of national security, and seek, when appropriate, demonstrate public support for that posture and build consensus;
- where possible, explain policy to the public in credible fashion.

Despite its current mixed image in the eyes of its future allies, the Czech Republic has the potential to contribute a great deal. This potential can be seen in the country's historical, cultural, economic, and democratic traditions. It is up to the citizens of the Czech Republic, however, to encourage their political representatives to obtain a secure future as well as respect of the NATO allies.

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